

Building and Keeping

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[0 : 0 0] Let us again turn to this portion of scripture we've read together, the epistle, general epistle of Jude, chapter 1, and again let us focus our attention particularly on verses 20 and 21. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. One or two words about these verses.

Many of the commentators on scripture believe that this Jude, the writer of the epistle, is none other than the Lord's brother. We have a list of names of the Lord's brethren given to us in the gospel and Jude was one of them. And many believe that he is the writer of this epistle, having been converted of course and a follower of Christ. And he says at the very beginning of the letter here, Jude the servant of Jesus Christ. He is the servant of Christ, despite the fact that he was his brother, nevertheless he is his servant. And then he is writing to those who are believers, because the epistle that he is writing is addressed particularly to those who are believers. Gesellsches. Gesellschaft is three writers, ■■■ up ahead of during the Rhodeslitas that are Isaac, which are ■■■ly communities that come to understand with the ■■■ compensation rules for his similarly said do not calling and God sets them apart for himself and the Holy Spirit comes to indwell them and they are being personally sanctified and made holy as the Holy Spirit imparts the blessings of Christ to them. They are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ. They are kept by him.

They are safe for time and for eternity. Whatever happens in their experience in this world, those who are blessed by God are safe for time and for eternity and they are called, called with God's effectual calling. These are the people to whom he's writing and then he prays in verse 2, Mercy unto you and peace and love be multiplied. They are those who have known God's mercy already but Jude prays that they might know more of it. They are those who know God's peace already. Nevertheless he prays that they might know more of that peace of God that passes all understanding. They are those who are beloved by God and into whose hearts the love of God has come.

Nevertheless the prayer of Jude is that they might know more and more of that love of God and don't you ask for these things yourself every day that you might know his mercy and his peace and his love more and more. Surely he is rich in mercy and he is the God of peace and he loves his people with an everlasting love and may we all know something and more and more of these blessings for ourselves.

But then as he begins the letter he tells those to whom he's writing, I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation. But then he realized it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. These people who have had such wonderful blessings in the gospel.

[5 : 1 2] He now calls them to fulfill a particular duty. You know with every privilege there comes a responsibility and that's what we have here in this gospel setting.

The privileges of these people are amazing. Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, called they know mercy and peace and love in the gospel. Now he says I have particular work for you to engage in.

And it's a work that's going to be heavy work. It's a work that's going to be agonizing for you. And that's what he's calling them to do here. That you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

And then he gives us a list of things that he sees.

Verse 4. I'm just saying these few words by way of introduction because I think it's important. In verse 4 there are certain men crept in unawares who were before of old ordained to this condemnation.

[6 : 48] Ungodly men turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ungodly men have crept in turning, it says, the grace of our God into lasciviousness. We believe that what he's talking about is people came in, into the church, into the communities where these Christians were living.

And they were people who said we are Christians ourselves. But we live any way we want. We gratify our carnal nature.

We gratify our sinful inclinations. We just do what we feel we want to do. And we call ourselves Christians. Does that echo with the kind of society we're in today?

People who live just the way they want. Giving vent to every department of sinful activity. And still they present themselves as Christians.

[7 : 59] Well, I know there's nothing new under the sun. And the problems that faced the people to whom Jude was writing in the first century, they face us today.

And these words that called these people in Jude's day to agonise for the gospel. They are surely appropriate to us here today.

Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. Earnestly contend for the gospel. Engage in the fight.

In the good fight of faith. If you think of the apostle Paul coming to the end of his life. And you read this in 2 Timothy chapter 4. He says, I have fought the good fight.

What is he talking about? This very thing. He fought the good fight of faith. He stood up for what was true. He stood up and declared what was right on the ground of scripture.

[9 : 09] And he lived according to what the scripture said. He was a witness, a shining light in the darkness of his day. And that's what we are called upon to do.

To stand up and be counted for Jesus Christ. For the truth of the gospel. For the teachings of God's word. To live for Christ.

And not unto ourselves. Now he goes through the chapter. And he describes various kinds of people who came in.

And the kind of activities that they had. But then coming to the words of our text. It's as if he puts up a finer point on what he is asking them to do.

There in verse 3. To earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

[10 : 07] How are we going to do that? How are we going to agonise? To earnestly contend? To fight the good fight? Well in verses 20 and 21.

I think he summarises it. Under four headings. First of all he says. But ye beloved. Building up yourselves on your most holy faith.

Praying in the Holy Ghost. Keep yourselves in the love of God. Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. Unto eternal life. There are four things there I think.

That are clearly. The responsibility. Of those who want to live. A godly life. In this sad and sinful world. Firstly.

They need to be builders. Building up yourselves. On your most holy faith. That's the first thing. Secondly. They need to be praying people.

[11 : 08] Praying in the Holy Ghost. First. Thirdly. They need to be keeping people. Protecting. Keeping yourselves.

In the love of God. And fourthly. They need to be expectant people. Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. Unto eternal life.

These four things. Firstly. He asks them. To be builders. Building up yourselves.

On your most holy faith. Well. There is one thing. For sure. That everyone whom.

The Lord has effectually called. He has. Placed. Upon. The foundation. The foundation. That is Christ Jesus.

[12 : 10] Christ is the living stone. And everyone. Placed in him. Or blessed in him. Is.

Grounded in him. And becomes a living. Or lively stone. Himself. Or herself. Well. But.

It is a wonderful thing. To see a newborn child. But if you go back after a year. And you realize the child hasn't grown. You think.

Well there's something wrong here. And this is what the apostle. I believe. Here is saying. That he is saying. You need to. Grow.

You need. To build. Up. Yourselves. On your most. Holy. Faith. You need.

[13 : 06] To be. Growing. In the knowledge. And in the grace. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the way the apostle Peter finishes.

His epistle. Grow in grace. And in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior. Jesus Christ. Now. This is our responsibility.

That the Lord here. places upon us. Building up. Yourselves. How is it possible for us. To build up.

Ourselves. Well. You remember what Peter says. That he asks us to desire.

The sincere milk of the word. That we may grow. Thereby. It's by involving yourselves. Wholeheartedly.

[14 : 09] With the word of God. Involving yourselves. Wholeheartedly. With the means of grace. And God has promised.

To bless the means of grace. To those who truly. And faithfully. Use them. And that is the way. Growth comes.

In Ephesians chapter 2. At verse 20. He talks about. This. You are built. He says. Upon the foundation. Of the apostles.

And the prophets. That means. That means. The word of God. The scriptures. Of the old and the new testaments. They are our foundation.

And when we are rooting into the foundation. We draw upon these elements. That make up the scriptures. By the grace of God.

[15 : 07] Through the blessing of Christ. We are being blessed. And strengthened. And we grow in grace. And in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour.

We grow stronger. We grow in faith. We grow in love. We grow in the graces. That the Lord has planted. In our hearts and lives.

We are built upon the foundation. Of the apostles and the prophets. Jesus Christ himself. Being the chief cornerstone. And this is what he says. In whom all the building.

Fitly framed together. Groweth unto an holy temple. In the Lord. You see.

When we expose ourselves. And engross ourselves. In the word of God. And in the scriptures. Of the old and the new testament.

[16 : 07] By the spirit's. Application of these things. To us. We are strengthened. We are enabled to grow. In knowledge. Grow in understanding.

Grow in the graces. That the Lord has planted. In our hearts and lives. Isn't it wonderful. That he promises.

That these things will be so. That we will grow. In grace. And in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour. Jesus Christ.

He wouldn't send. A newborn babe. Into the battlefield. But he says to them here.

For you to be able to face up. To the challenges that have come into your society. With these evil men. Propounding that they are Christians.

[17 : 04] But living any way they want. How are you going to face up to them. How are you going to face up to them. Well you have to be strong. In the faith. And you have to be given strength from on high.

And you have to be. Dependent upon. The Lord Jesus. Who is able to supply all your needs. According to his riches in glory.

By Christ Jesus himself. Building up. Building up. Yourselves. On your most.

Holy faith. Could I ask before I go on. Are you. Standing upon. This most holy faith. Are you standing.

Upon Christ Jesus. As your. Foundation. As your hope for time and eternity. Are you in him. Seeking to do his will.

[18 : 04] Seeking to please him. Seeking to live for him. Well if you are. This applies to you. He asks you to grow. In grace.

And. In knowledge of him. That's the first thing. They have to be builders. Secondly.

He says. Praying. In the Holy Ghost. Praying. In the Holy Ghost. The gentleman we had.

Visiting you here. I think last year. Dr. Adam. The missionary who. Works in Central Asia. I heard him.

On a number of occasions. Speaking. And he said. Something like this. He said. There's nothing wrong. With the theology.

[19 : 07] In the free church. He says. What the free church needs. More than anything else. Is. More prayer.

Prayer. That's what he said. More prayer. And. Certainly. Somebody once said.

That the devil. Trembles. When he sees. A Christian. On his knees. In prayer. And.

Jude. Here. Comes to that. Very. Same point. Praying. In. The Holy Ghost. Now that's important.

You find in the gospel. An account of two men. Who went up to the temple. To pray. One was a Pharisee. And the other a publican.

[20 : 07] And the Pharisee. Was full of words. And maybe his diction. Was perfect. Maybe there was nothing wrong. With the expressions. Of his language.

But his heart. Was not right. With God. He was praising himself. In prayer. The Lord. Didn't justify him.

He wasn't justified. He wasn't blessed. But the Lord. Said of the other man. The tax collector. That he stood afar off. And he wouldn't lift up his eyes.

Unto heaven. But smote his breast. And said. God be merciful to me. The sinner. And the Lord said. He went down to his house. Justified. He was blessed.

He had a real prayer. A prayer from his heart. His needy heart. Heart taught by the spirit of God. A prayer.

[21 : 07] Produced by the spirit of God. God. Praying in the Holy Ghost. What does it mean?

What is prayer? The catechism reminds us. That prayer involves this. Coming into the presence of God.

Confessing our sins. Asking for things according to his will. In the name of Christ.

Confessing our sins. And thanking him for his mercies. The point I want to highlight from that particular catechism quotation is. Asking for things in accordance with his will.

When we know his will. From his word. And we pray for what pleases him. And what's according to his mind and purpose.

[22 : 12] Come in that spirit. Of dependence. Asking him to fulfill. What he promises. To do.

Asking him. For things according to his own mind. And purpose. Praying.

In the Holy Ghost. There was a man. A long time ago. In the island.

His name was Colin Wornohony. He was. A man of prayer. A friend of his. Went across the island.

On foot. Across the moor. To see him one day. And Colin Wornohony. Was just coming out of his house. He was going to his barn.

[23 : 10] To pray. And he said to his friend. I can't go into the house with you just now. This is my time for prayer. And he left his friend.

And went and did business with God. In prayer. How many of us. Have a time of day. Where we go apart from everything and everyone.

To do business with the Lord. I mean real business. Spreading it all before him. Asking for his blessing.

To come upon ourselves. Upon our family. Our congregation. Our nation. Wrestle with him.

As it says here in verse 3. Earnestly content. For the faith. Wrestle with him. For the good of your own soul.

[24 : 09] The souls of others. And the plight. And the plight of our communities. And the plight of our nation. Praying. In the Holy Ghost.

Isn't the Lord Jesus. Encouraging. When he says to us in the gospel. Ask. And it shall be given to you. Seek and you shall find.

Knock. And the door shall be opened. Unto you. What an amazing. Set of promises. These are. And then he says.

If you who are sinful. Know how to give good gifts. To your children. How much more. Will your father in heaven. Give the Holy Spirit. To those who ask him.

Ask him for his Holy Spirit. To come upon you mightily. That you might pray. In the Holy Spirit. And continue praying. And with Isaiah.

[25 : 14] When he says. I will not give you rest. Until you. Make Jerusalem. A praise in the earth. Praying.

In the Holy Ghost. God. And thirdly. He asks them. To be keepers. And thirdly. He asks them. To be keepers.

Keeping yourselves. In the love of God. Well at the very beginning. Of the chapter. He makes clear.

That they are. A people who are. Blessed by God. And they are beloved. Of God. The Lord's love.

Has come into their lives. Like the sunshine. Came. Into their lives. And scattered. The darkness. Of sin. They are beloved.

[26 : 13] Of him. But then you see. It says here. Keep yourselves. In. The love of God. God. Somebody was.

Talking about this. And he said. Why would you. Go out of the sunshine. Into the shadows. Why would you.

Go out of God's path. Into another path. Well that's what happens. Sadly. The Lord Jesus.

Writing to. Or speaking to the church there. Churches in Asia. He said. One of them had left. Its first love. Turned away from the.

Brightness. And the blessing of God. Into some shadowy area of life. Maybe to indulge in some sin. Or something.

[27 : 15] Worldly. And by involving. Involving yourself in this worldly thing. You go out of the light. Into the darkness. You go out of the love of God.

Well who would want to do that. Certainly those who are. Charged here. With contending for the faith. Must not do that. Must not do that.

Humanly speaking. The gospel. The gospel. Witness. Witness. Depends. On us. Remaining. In the love of God. Remaining in the light.

That's what. The apostle John says. Walk in the light. As he is in the light. What light is he talking about? Particularly. The light of God's word.

Walk in the light. Of God's word. Do what God's word commands. Embrace. Embrace. Embrace what God's word promises. Do what God's word directs.

[28 : 18] Walk in the light. According to the word of God. And it says here. Keep yourselves. In the love of God.

You know. A professed Christian. Who isn't.

Keeping him or herself. In the love of God. Cannot fight the Lord's battles. Cannot. Only the one.

Who is keeping. In the love of God. Can be strong enough. To fight the Lord's battles. And we see here.

Keep yourselves. In the love of God. The Lord is.

[29 : 20] Long suffering. And he. Calls us back to himself. He says. If you love me.

Keep my commandments. And that's the way. To keep in his love. To keep. Walking. According to his word. Keep walking.

In obedience. To his word. In. Dependence. On his spirit. Walking. The narrow path. However.

However. However. Narrow it becomes. However. Steep. The road might become. However. Strong. The wind. Of opposition. To your witness. Might become.

He will supply. Strength to you. If you walk. In his word. And if you. Keep. In his love. He knows.

[30 : 21] Our need. He knows. Exactly. Where we are. And when you're at breaking point. He knows. Remember.

Somebody asked. One of the ministers. I'll just mention. It was the Reverend John McSween. Some of you will remember him. He was over at point.

Asked him how he was. I can't remember the. The particular setting. The situation. How are you today? That's what he said. I'm at breaking point.

But not breaking. Well it's not easy to be at breaking point. But it's wonderful to know. The almighty hand.

That prevents us. From breaking. And this is what he says. Keep. Yourselves. In the love of God. The God who loves you.

[31 : 20] Who knows the very pulse. Of your heart. And of your soul. And whose grace. Always is sufficient. He never lets you down.

Oh sadly we. Let him down. But he never lets. His people down. Keep yourselves then.

Close to such a friend. As Jesus is. In love. Keep yourselves in the love of God. And finally. Looking for the mercy.

Of our Lord Jesus Christ. Unto eternal life. Looking. For the mercy. Well the word here. Looking.

Can. Be translated. With these words. Expecting. The fulfillment. Of promises.

[32 : 21] Looking for the mercy. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. Unto eternal life. Expect. Expect. The fulfillment. Of promises.

Of promises. In this fight. What is the Lord saying? I will never leave you. I will never forsake you.

Isn't that an amazing promise? However tough. However tough it becomes. However trying. The situation. However difficult it is. For you to witness.

Jesus says. I am not leaving you. Nor forsaking you. And you are looking for that. To be fulfilled. Expect. Grace. To help.

In your time of need. Looking for. It says. The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. Looking for his mercy. And you say.

[33 : 18] Well if I am supposed to witness. I don't really know. What to say. Well you ask him. To fill your mouth. When the time comes.

Every time you go out of the house. Pray. That the Lord will. Send somebody. Your way. To whom you might. Witness. And leave a word for the Lord.

With them. That is part of the great fight. The great witnessing. Responsibility. And privilege. That the people of God have.

And. He promises. To bless his own word. In his own way. And in his own time. We look for him to fulfill.

What he promises to do. My word shall not return unto me. Void. It will accomplish that which I please. And prosper in the thing where to.

[34 : 17] I send it. And we have to be faithful. Living according to the word. And. Speaking the word. With those.

Around us. Looking for the Lord's. Blessing upon it. According to his promise. In his own time. And in his own way.

Aren't you looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ. When you pray for your family. He does say.

Ask. And it shall be given to you. Seek. And you shall find. Knock. And the door shall be opened unto you. Surely you are waiting for.

An answer from heaven. In response to the prayers. On behalf. Of your family. Of your people. Of your community. Surely.

[35 : 14] Surely you are. Looking for. The mercy. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have. By grace. To be expectant.

In our prayer life. Expecting. An answer. Expecting. The Lord. To do great things. According. To his promise.

Looking for the mercy. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. Unto. Eternal. Life. That is. Into eternal life.

Looking forward. To the day. When eternal life. Will actually be realized. By us.

Up until that moment. We have to fight. We have to keep ourselves. In the love of God. We have to pray. We have to witness.

[36 : 15] Until. The Lord. Takes us away. To enjoy. Eternal life. In its fullness. In heaven. John Calvin.

There was one time. That he was feeling. The burdens. Of ministry. Extremely heavy. And it's as if he went. To the Lord. And he said to the Lord.

Lord. How long do I have to carry. These burdens. And however he. Received an answer. From the Lord. This is. What Calvin said.

I realized. I had to carry. My burdens. Every day. Of my life. To the end. And that's the way we are.

To be as Christians. It's not just for the good times. Or the easy times. But for every time. And every day.

[37 : 20] To agonize. For the faith. Fight for the faith. Witness for Christ. Every day. And in every situation.

Of my life. I told a story. I think. At the induction.

About back. Some years ago now. I read about. Two Christians. Long ago. And. One of them.

Was passing one day. And. He saw his friend. Over there. Talking to some. Worldly people. And he said something. About. Witnessing to them.

And his friend said. Well he said. You know what I do. I throw the stones. On top of the ice. And although the stones.

[38 : 18] Don't seem to penetrate. When I throw them on. I know one thing. That when the springtime comes. And the warmth comes. The ice will melt.

And the stones. Will go right through. What he meant by that. Of course was. He was witnessing. To these people. They didn't seem to respond.

At the time. Nevertheless. It's as if he was leaving. A scripture with them. And when the springtime. Of God's love. Would come. If it came to them.

The scripture. Would penetrate. Into their heart. Into their soul. And bring God's blessing. That's what we have to do. However hard it might be.

Nevertheless. Trust the Lord. That he's able to. Bring life. And bring blessing. In. Sad. Sad days.

[39 : 14] In our land. And in our community. The people of God. They are. To build up themselves. On their most holy faith.

Pray in the Holy Ghost. To keep themselves. In the love of God. And look. For the mercy. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. Unto. Eternal life.

May God bless. To King of God. For the mercy. ■ Even in ■■■. To Stan. To sin.

To. Sure. To the mercy. Hay. To David. To King. Chase.■■■■. Heal. bor wielu virtue.