

Keeping On

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Date: 05 March 2023

[0 : 0 0] We'll begin our worship by singing to God's praise. We're going to sing in Psalm 20, in the Scottish Psalter. Psalm 20, we're singing verse 1 to verse 7, the tune is Kilmarnock.

Jehovah, hear thee in the day when trouble he does send, and let the name of Jacob's God thee from all ill defend. Psalm speaks about the help we get from the Lord, and in verse 7 we're reminded of how some people put confidence in horses.

In chariots, some put confidence in some horses thrust upon. That speaks of a time when people looked to the help of nations and armies around them, that they would support them in their time of need.

But it says, but we remember, will the name of our Lord God alone. We're reminded there to put our hope and our trust and confidence in God alone.

So let's sing verse 1 to verse 7 to God's praise. Jehovah, hear thee in the day when trouble he does send, And let the name of Jacob's God The prophet will defend O let him help send the mother Out of his sanctuary From Zion his own glory

[2 : 0 4] Let him give strength to thee Let him be ever all I give I'll set thy sacrifice Grant me thy heart's wish And fulfill thy thoughts And counsel wise In thy salvation we will join In our cross name we will

His play of others And the Lord thy players all fulfill Now know why God his kingdom say He from his holy hand Will hear him when the saving strength By his own right hand In the chariot some good confidence Some horses trust upon

That we remember Will the name Of our Lord God alone Let's bow our heads in a word of prayer Let us pray Lord our gracious God We do thank you for your word And for the great privilege it is To be able to sing praise to you That you are the one who we can come And call upon at this time And indeed any time Be it day or night Lord We thank you that you are the one Who is able to hear us When we cry in our trouble And we thank you that it is under your name That we are able to find refuge That we are able to find protection And we know Lord that we all need you

We are all a people who are Perishing as your word says We are all a people who have Within us Lord that knowledge That our time in this world Is but passing by so quickly You are reminded to us Lord So often When we hear of people passing In young age When we hear of so many things That happen around us In our own lives and experience When we see what is taking place Throughout the world We are reminded of A people perishing always But we thank you that your word Reminds us too That there is life through you That although our time in this world May be short That for each of us There is a reminder of an eternity Before us An unending age An experience for which We all must prepare For your word reminds us

To be ready To be prepared for that day A day when the Lord is coming To judge a people To judge all people And we know that it is only Through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ That we are ready for that day And so we pray Lord That you will help us To find our refuge in you To find in the Lord Jesus Christ The one who is able To take away our sin The one who is able to cleanse us The one who is able To keep us from stumbling And we pray Lord That even this night As we come together As we think of ourselves And as we think of all That's going on around us That you will help us All to see Jesus Help us all to know him And through your word And by your spirit As we once again come and hear Your word speaking to us Help us that it will not Pass over us

[7:15] Or not just pass through us But that it will take root That it will take root In our hearts And that it will help us To come And know what it is To be a people of faith And to be built up In the faith And so may you be with us In our time of worship And be with all Who gather as we do To praise your name And we do thank you As always Lord That from the rising of the sun To its setting That your name is praised Throughout the world We marvel at the situations Where your name is praised We thank you Lord For so many nations Of the world So many people So many tribes And tongues All connected by your name The name that is above Every name We thank you for brothers And sisters around the world We thank you that we are one In Christ Jesus And we pray Lord That you will help us To be united

And bound together as one That all our differences All our different ways Of looking at things All the differences of opinion That might exist Even among your own people That we will be all agreed In one thing That salvation belongs to God And that salvation is found In the Lord Jesus Christ And so may your name Be glorified far and wide May you draw sinners to you Even anew this day May they be rejoicing in heaven Over sinners being saved We pray that even for ourselves here Lord that the heavens Would rejoice this night As people's hearts would be opened As they would receive by grace The Lord Jesus Christ As they would know him As only he can be known Through your word And by your spirit That we would come to know him Even more personally

And even more intimately That we would weep over our sins That then we would rejoice In the goodness of God And in the forgiveness of our sins Through faith And so Lord May you bless us in our time And hear our prayers As we offer them up Hear our prayers For our people here And belonging to us We know Lord That the troubles of this world Are many And how many need you In different ways this night How many need your help In times of illness How many people need you In times of grief and sorrow How many people who need you In times of fear And anxiety and worry We know all around us That the troubles of this world Are many But we thank you For the great gift And the power of prayer And so may you surround our people May you be with them In all their different needs Young, old, middle-aged alike That all of our needs

Would be met by you For you know them each one You know every home Where there are tears being wept Even at this time You know every home Where there is sorrow and sadness You know every home Where there is longing Longing to know you Longing to be among your people Longing for help and support In so many different ways And Lord, teach us and help us To love one another Teach us to get to know one another To pray for one another as we should To encourage one another To help one another Lord, we pray that you will surround us And build us up together As a people For as your word says We are one body Of many parts And when one part hurts The rest of the body Is affected as well And so we pray, Lord For all our pains And all our sorrows Oh Lord, that you will comfort and help But we thank you too That there is reason

For rejoicing in you That you are the God Who is at work That you are the God Who is building his church That you are the God Who will not be overcome And so we rejoice, Lord In your kingdom A kingdom that is coming with power And we thank you That throughout the world That you are bearing fruit And we pray for our own nation At this time That in the troubles That we see around us You would turn us towards you That our nation would again Bear fruit for you Bear fruit from the top Top of our society All the way down From those who rule And govern over us, Lord To our councils To our homes And our families All around us To our workplaces And throughout our communities Far and wide Oh Lord, that your spirit Will be upon us To bring a day of your power Into our midst So we pray, Lord For leaders over us And for potential leaders

[12:17] Over us And for all that goes on In our land We pray for your wisdom And for your guidance We pray for your peace Throughout the world Peace in the nations Of conflict and troubles That are many Peace in the midst Of terror and fear And so many other things We pray, Lord For your healing hand To be upon us To bring conflicts To an end To turn war into peace To bring a renewal Into our lands, oh Lord Where we see evil That we would see good Oh Lord, we ask these things Acknowledging our own weakness We can do nothing Apart from you And so we ask Independence upon you Asking, knowing That you are Lord And God of all And so we pray, Lord That you will help us To have faith And to pray with that faith We thank you For all our people here And we pray Your blessing On all that's been done This day For our young people In our services of worship

And in the fellowship To come this evening as well We pray, Lord That your blessing Will follow all things We thank you For the youth fellowship To take place And may it be blessed To all who attend We thank you For Muriel, Lord For the time She has enjoyed At home with us And for her preparations For going away, Lord We pray for everything That needs to be done To enable her To go back to Cambodia And as she looks forward To returning to that work God willing We pray Your protection And your blessing on her And upon all The work that she does There with so many others We pray, Lord That your blessing Will follow it And for all your people Who serve you Near and far, Lord We pray for strength For encouragement And for your help In persevering And keeping on In all that we do So bless us now And go before us Pardoning all our sin As we ask it all In Jesus' name Amen Well again, sing to God's praise

This time in Psalm 27 In the Sing Psalms version Page 32 of the Psalm books We're going to sing From verse 9 To verse 14 The end of the Psalm Psalm 27 At verse 9 Do not hide your face from me And do not turn aside Your servant in your righteous wrath For you have been my guide O God, my Saviour Leave me not Do not reject my plea My parents may forsake me, Lord But you will welcome me We'll sing from verse 9 To the end of the Psalm And the tune is Belmont Oh, do not hide your face from me And do not turn aside

Your servant in your righteous wrath For you have been my guide O God, my Saviour Leave me not Do not reject my plea My valence may forsake me, Lord But you will welcome me Teach me, O Lord

How I should live And lead me in your way Make straight my path In all time falls Oppress me every day Give me not over to the will Of David Gentiles For my heart For my heart To slander me For my heart

[17:24] To slander me And greet the cruelty Yet I am sure Yet I am sure That in this time God's goodness I will see Wait for the Lord Lord He strong He strong Take heart For him Wake Wait patiently Wait patiently Wait patiently Wait for the Lord I am sure I am sure I am sure I am sure I am sure We are going to take To the second To the second Book of the Bible Before Revelation The letter of Jude Read the whole of this letter together

The letter of Jude From the beginning Jude A servant of Jesus Christ And brother of James To those who are called beloved in God The father and kept for Jesus Christ May mercy Peace And love Be multiplied to you Beloved Although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation I found it necessary to write appealing to you To contend For the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints For certain people have crept in unnoticed Who long ago were designated for this condemnation And godly people Who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality And deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ Now I want to remind you Although you once fully knew it

That Jesus who saved a people out of the land of Egypt Afterwards destroyed those who did not believe And the angels who did not stay within their own position Of authority But left their proper dwelling He has kept in eternal chains Under gloomy darkness Until the judgment of the great day Just as Sodom and Gomorrah And the surrounding cities Which likewise indulged in sexual immorality And pursued unnatural desire Serve as an example by undergoing a punishment Of eternal fire Yet in like manner these people also Relying on their dreams Defile the flesh Reject authority And blaspheme the glorious ones But when the archangel Michael Contending with the devil Was disputing about the body of Moses He did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment But said The Lord rebuke you

But these people blaspheme All that they do not understand And they are destroyed by all that they Like unreasoning animals Understand instinctively Woe to them For they walked in the way of Cain And abandoned themselves For the sake of gain to Balaam's error And perished in Korah's rebellion These are blemishes on your love feasts As they feast with you without fear Looking after themselves Waterless clouds Swept along by winds Fruitless trees In late autumn Twice dead Uprooted Wild waves of the sea Casting up the foam Of their own shame Wandering stars For whom the gloom of utter darkness Has been reserved forever It's also about these That Enoch the seventh from Adam Prophesied saying Behold the Lord came with ten thousands Of his holy ones

To execute judgment on all And to convict all the ungodly Of all their deeds of ungodliness That they have committed In such an ungodly way And of all the harsh things That ungodly sinners have spoken against him These are grumblers Grumblers Malcontents Following their own sinful desires They are loud mouth boasters Showing favoritism to gain advantage But you must remember beloved The predictions of the apostles Of our Lord Jesus Christ They said to you In the last time There will be scoffers Following their own ungodly passions It is these who cause divisions Worldly people Devoid of the spirit But you beloved Build yourselves up In your most holy faith Pray in the Holy Spirit

[22 : 37] Keep yourselves in the love of God Waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ That leads to eternal life And have mercy on those who doubt Save others by snatching them out of the fire To others show mercy With fear hating even the garment Stained by the flesh Now to him who is able To keep you from stumbling And to present you blameless Before the presence of his glory With great joy To the only God our Saviour Through Jesus Christ our Lord Be glory, majesty, dominion and authority Before all time and now and forever Amen May God bless that reading from his word Before we turn back to that passage We'll again sing to God's praise in Psalm 62 Again we're in the sing psalms On page 79

Psalm 62 On page 79 We're going to sing from verse 1 To verse 8 And the tune is Herringate My soul finds rest in God alone From him comes my salvation sure My safety, fortress, sheltering rock In him alone I am secure We'll sing from verse 1 To verse 8 To God's praise My soul finds rest in God alone From him comes my salvation sure My safety, fortress, sheltering rock

In him alone I am secure How long will you assault a man?

Do you all seek to lay in love? This meanly wall, this taunting face And bring our albis overgrown They plough his whole promises They take delight in spreading light With force and ploughing, bounding legs But in their hearts

Curse and despise Find praise my soul In God alone In him my hope is ever sure My safety, fortress, sheltering rock In him alone I am secure My honor and salvation praise My honor and salvation praise On God my hope My honor and salvation praise On God my hope My honor and salvation praise On God my hope My honor and salvation praise On God my hope My honor and salvation praise On God my hope On God my hope My glory On God my hope My honor and salvation praise On God my glory On God my glory

[27 : 04] On God my glory On God my glory On God my glory All God my glory Christ in him always, to him alone for a pure heart.

Well, we can turn back together to our reading in the letter of Jude. And we're going to look at the end of this letter, verse 17 onwards in particular.

And just to note three things in these verses that we're going to focus in on particularly. Verse 17, verse 20, and verse 24.

And twice it says there in verse 17 and 20, But you, but you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then at verse 20, But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith. And then in verse 24 it says, Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling.

[28 : 20] And so on. So we see there there's two, but you. And then at the end, now to him. That's what we're going to be looking at in particular this evening, these verses.

I'm sure many of you from time to time you'll receive a brown envelope through the post. And that envelope will be marked, well marked now, on his majesty's service.

In the past it used to be on her majesty's service. There's an element of importance attached to this envelope. And maybe for some people you see it arriving and it fills you maybe with a sense of dread.

What am I going to see when I open this envelope? For other people there may be a sense of anticipation. I wonder if there's anything good coming inside this envelope.

Sometimes it's good where you maybe get tax back or something like that. You get a rebate. Other times and maybe more often, it's asking you to make payment.

[29 : 28] That you owe something. But whatever comes in this envelope, whenever that envelope arrives on his majesty's service, there's one thing that you mustn't do with it.

And that is to ignore it. Just to put it away somewhere and forget all about and say, I'll deal with that later. I'm just not interested on what's inside it.

We cannot ignore these kinds of letters. And so as we turn to this letter of Jude this evening, you see the way Jude describes himself in the opening verse of this letter.

And there is a reminder to us of the importance of this letter. Indeed, the importance of all of God's word. Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ.

Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ. So this letter, it comes with a stamp of authority. This is an important letter.

[30 : 34] This is truly on his majesty's service. Our king is speaking to us through his word. And above all, as with all scripture, this is something that we cannot ignore.

Maybe for some of us, we look forward to hearing what this letter, what God's word has to say to us. Maybe for others, we're a little fearful coming to God's word and hearing what is going to be in God's word for us.

Because we're always challenged, we're always convicted by God's word. But one thing none of us can do is just choose to ignore it and choose to put it away and maybe deal with it another time.

Because every time we hear this word, the king is speaking to us. And so we want to hear what God the Lord is saying to us together this evening through his word here.

And this is a letter that is maybe difficult to just figure out who it's being written to. Some have speculated whether it's written to Gentiles.

[31 : 49] Some have said it's written more towards the Jewish people, the two main kinds of people in Jude's day. But most have come down on the side that it's written to both. It's written to Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, who, as we see in this letter, are having to contend with having to deal with false teaching coming into their midst.

They're living very much in the midst of a pagan society. Society that really wants little to do with God. And similar to what we were hearing together this morning of Daniel and his days in Babylon.

Days when people were trying to pull them away from God and bring them into their own ways of thinking. And that's exactly what's happening here in Jude's day as well.

And as you look at this letter, you see in the opening verses, in verse 3 and 4, we are told this congregation of Christians that Jude is writing to, he's writing to encourage them to contend for the faith.

It says that in verse 3. I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

[33 : 06] So there's this purpose in his writing to the Christians to contend with the faith, to keep going in the faith, to remain strong in the faith.

And then he tells the reason why he has to write, for certain people have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were designated for this condemnation. ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God.

So they were perverting the truth. They were giving them this false teaching. And so Jude is writing to them to encourage them to contend in the faith, to keep going in the faith.

And from verse 5 to verse 16, he outlines a number of the problems that they are facing, a number of the challenges that they are facing, what they are to beware of, of all of these false teachers who have come.

And again, just like this morning with Daniel, and as we look around our world today, we're surrounded by false teaching, by teaching that in many ways is crazy in our eyes.

[34 : 17] But yet we find that even in the midst of all of this, the word of God is so timely to us. For every situation, for every circumstance that we find ourselves in, there's nothing new under the sun.

That's what God's words reminds us in the book of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament, that there's nothing new under the sun. And so as generations pass and as time goes on, we find ourselves coming against the same issues time and time again.

But then in verse 17 to verse 25, Jude outlines the response that God's people are to have in every generation, in every set of circumstances.

And that is to always look to God. How to deal with these situations, how to keep on, it is always to look to God.

Because just as there's nothing new under the sun, God is a constant in it all as well. He is the one who has brought his people through every occasion, whether it's Daniel and his compatriots there in Babylon, whether it's going back to the days of God's people in Egypt, whether it's going into the New Testament and the disciples going out with the Lord.

[35 : 40] All of these things, the constant is that God is faithful to his people. And in this letter, Jude gives us encouragement, how to keep on.

The encouragement that people needed then and that maybe we need today as well. To keep going and to keep looking and trusting in God, no matter what is going on around us.

And you see it in three parts, as I was saying there in this letter to Jude. Under these beginnings where he says, but you, but you, and now to him who is able.

And we're going to break it down into these three sections. In verse 17 to 19, he gives us a call to remembrance. In verse 20 and 23, he gives us an exhortation to grow, to build ourselves up in the faith.

And then at the end of the letter, verse 24 to 25, we see we are to remember that God is the one who is able to keep us.

[36 : 45] That is what we have to do on the one hand, and that what God is doing for his people on the other hand, and both go together. And so in the midst of the variety of false teaching that Jude is writing about in these opening verses, he comes back to conclude the letter in a positive way, giving instructions so we not only see the challenges around us, and the reality of God is over them, but we also see that God is the one who is able to bring us through them, and that we can grow in our knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So there's these two sides to this Christian perseverance. Our part to keep on, and God's part in his keeping of us.

So the first thing we want to see is the remembering side of things. But just before we come to that, I want us to think of these words that it begins with in verse 17.

But you. There's a change in the letter here with Jude. After going through all that is wrong in the false teaching that has come into their midst, now he begins a new section in verse 17 saying, but you.

There's an indication here that there are people who are to be different. As we were hearing the children's address this morning, it's this free from.

[38 : 20] We are to be different as God's people. And that's what these words mean at the start, but you. There's a challenge to God's people. And that asks the question immediately of us, what side are we on?

There's a contrast in the opening verses of all that is wrong with the world of Jude's day, where people are being pulled into this way of thinking, this way of living.

You can read through it again when you go home this evening. But you see the manner of these people, as he says in verse 8. The manner of these people relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, blaspheme the glorious one.

All that is wrong with the people is outlined almost in these words. They put away authority, they blaspheme the glorious one.

There is you who is on that side. But as Jude goes on there in verse 17, he says, but you are different. And so the question as we start is, is that the side that you are on?

[39 : 52] Are you on the side that is blaspheming the glorious one? Going along with the pull of this world and the way of this world that's going further and further away from God?

Or are you like Daniel, standing on the other side? Standing for the Lord. And maybe it's a question, you're afraid to be asked.

It's a question you maybe want to avoid at certain times. Maybe it's a question you maybe dread a minister coming to ask you. But what about you?

But it's an unavoidable question. And it's a question I put to you all tonight. But you, this evening, what side are you on?

Are we on the side that blasphemes? Or are we on the side that is going on in the strength of the Lord? And as we move on, we're going to see that the you that he is talking to here is the side we must be on.

[40 : 59] The side of faith. The side of trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ and growing in our knowledge of him. But that question remains, but you, what side are you on?

So then we go on to see what he's saying to these people. And he says, first of all, but you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He has warned that false teachers have come in. But now he's saying to them, there is this challenge. But you, are you going to be different?

Are you going to remember the word of God? Are you going to remember the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ? They said to you, in the last time there will be scoffers following their own ungodly passions.

So here he's challenging the people in us, he's challenging ourselves to remember these things, to remember these warnings that are come into our midst.

[42 : 09] People speak about the last days and if we're in the last days, well here it's made clear for us that even in Jude's day, this was the last days.

Because scoffers had come into their midst. And so in these days that we are living in today, we are still seeing the same thing.

Scoffers following their own ungodly passions. And how do we keep going in the midst of this? How do we keep on? How do we remain faithful?

We remember the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. So as we see so much around us that doesn't make sense, as we see so much that is a going away from God, how do we respond?

Well there's certain kinds of reactions that we could have. Certain reactions that God's people in Jude's day, in the day of our Lord Jesus, in the days of the Old Testament, that they would have had.

[43 : 12] Reactions such as discouragement. It can be so discouraging when we see all of these things. Worry can come in. Where is our world going?

What direction are we going in? And it's natural for us to feel these things. Anger is a reaction we could have as well. All of these things are reactions that we could go through.

But Jude directs us here in what our reaction should be. to remember the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Because that reminds us that nothing should take us by surprise. Nothing happens unknown to God. All you have to do is look back to the teaching of the Lord Jesus himself.

How he predicted these days himself. In Matthew chapter 24, Jesus gave these kinds of warnings to his disciples before his death and resurrection and his ascension.

[44 : 16] What did he say to them? Matthew 24 verse 11, Jesus tells his disciples, and many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.

This is what's going to happen. This is the predictions of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the prediction of the apostles. Paul in the book of Acts chapter 20, verse 29, he says, I know that after my departure, fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

And he warns them that even from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things to draw away the disciples after them.

So what's he saying here? He's saying, remember the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They have told us that these things will happen.

And so as we hear that they will happen, we are to be on our guard. To be on our guard, ready against them. Jude is telling us not to be discouraged, not to be dismayed at all of this.

[45 : 30] This is part of the outworking of the last days. We may expect things to go from strength to strength for the cause of God.

We may expect blessing after blessing. We pray for it. But it's not always the case. There are challenges. There are persecutions. There are trials of all different kinds.

Even when we have faith. It's a bit like getting a medicine. Taking a tablet. And on the tablet, it will tell you what you're to take this tablet for.

It's going to help you with a certain kind of illness that you have. But if you don't read the tablet, if you don't read the instructions, you might start to feel even more unwell for a time.

You might start to feel unwell in a different way for a time. And you're thinking, this isn't right. This shouldn't be. This tablet is meant to help me. But with so much medication, it tells you that there are side effects.

[46 : 36] And if you don't read them, you don't know that they're going to come. And it can catch you off guard. But if you've read them, you'll know that they'll come at some point. And it won't catch you off guard.

And so, Jude is saying here, just like that, although you have blessings in Christ Jesus, remember that there are those who will come, scoffers following their own ungodly passions.

There are those who will seek to lead people astray. And as you remember these things, then you are prepared for them. Paul's charge to Timothy, to his young friend Timothy, was to remain faithful to the Word of God.

Because he warned them, holding faith and a good conscience. Because by rejecting this, some have made a shipwreck of their faith.

Some who have forgotten the predictions of the apostles. Some who have forgotten what God's Word says. Some who have not been prepared for the attacks that have come their way.

[47 : 46] They've made a shipwreck of their faith. And how easy it is for us to lose heart, not remembering what the Word of God says.

And in that, we can end up in a shipwreck or a car crash of our own faith too. In the early 90s, going back about 30 years now, there was a commercial, an advert on the telly for two different kinds of cars.

And the advert began with a car heading towards this wall. And the brakes being applied, but the car crashes into the wall and it's a wreck.

But yet, because of the way the car has been designed, the people inside are kept safe by airbags and the strength of the structure around them.

I think that's quite impressive. But then, there was another car showing in the same kind of situation, heading for the wall. But when the person applies the brakes, the brakes are so good that before the car crashes, it comes to a stop.

[48 : 57] And at this point, the man speaking in the advert cuts in and he says, cuts in to ask, would you prefer to live through wrecks or not get in wrecks in the first place?

And that's what God's Word is so often doing for us. It's helping us that we don't end up in this shipwreck, in this car crash of our faith because we're forgetting the things that God has told us.

And so, we are told here, but you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that these scoffers, these people who will seek to lead us astray, they will come in.

But he's saying, you keep on. Keep on by remembering the Word of God. And then he goes on secondly to say to them here, but you, beloved, so there's more to come here as well.

It's not just remembering and holding on to that, but now he's saying, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith. Pray in the Holy Spirit.

[50 : 14] Keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. So, here we are again, but you.

And we ask ourselves again, is this what you are like? Is this the side that you come down on? You have heard the phrase, the best form of defense is attack.

And so, Jude is here saying, not just to defend ourselves by remembering the predictions, but to go on the offensive here as well, to build yourselves up in your most holy faith, to do this as we all must, to build ourselves up in the holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keeping yourself in the love of God.

And so, it goes on. So, Jude is giving this direction to us for growth, building ourselves up in the faith, the building blocks of our faith, the things that we are to put into practice.

And it boils down to these four things, four basics of the Christian faith, but you must do this.

[51 : 36] Build yourselves up in your most holy faith. faith. Be devoted to the Word of God. Believe the Word of God.

Hold fast the Word of God. Just like he was saying to remember the predictions of the apostles that scoffers would come, we add to this everything else that the Word of God sees.

Everything else that the Word of God teaches us, that we are sinners, that we have fallen short of the glory of God, but that Jesus came to save us from our sin.

And that through faith and repentance we have this hope of eternal life. Be devoted to the Word of God to make it your daily portion day by day, not to neglect what this Word of God is saying, not to see it as a letter that can just be put away and forgotten about and ignored, but that this is God himself, our Lord and King speaking to us.

And he's saying, build yourselves up in your most holy faith. And then he says as well, pray in the Holy Spirit.

[53 : 00] Again, it's a part of our lives that we must never neglect, reminding ourselves how dependent we are on God as we seek to persevere.

We are dependent on him to persevere, to keep going. Pray in the Holy Spirit. Pray in the one who is called alongside us, the one who Jesus promised would come and be our comforter.

Be the one called alongside us to help us and to remind us that he is with us. And so we pray in his name.

And then he speaks about our experience. Keep yourselves in the love of God. It's not just about reminding ourselves that we love God and leaving it at that, but it's living in the knowledge of God's love for us and how that affects all that we do.

Because to feel unloved by God paralyzes us. To feel a failure before God as we so often do, it paralyzes us and our service is hindered.

[54 : 14] But here he says, keep yourselves in the love of God. And especially as we think of everything else that seeks to pull us back into the world.

If we think, there's no way God can love me. And the things of this world we think, well, we might as well just go back. But he's saying here, keep yourselves in the love of God.

Remind yourself, what does any false teacher have to offer me that compares to the love of God? There is nothing that this world can give me that will improve my life compared to knowing the love of God.

The love of God that gave his own son for our sins. The love of God that is able to preserve us and to keep us on in this world.

A love of God that's not dependent on our perfectly loving him because we so often don't. But remembering the steadfast love of God that never changes.

[55 : 23] His love love towards us. That we have been made a son and daughter of the Most High. That we have been brought into his family.

That we are precious to him keeping ourselves in the love of God. And then he says too, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

Again, that ties into how Jude is speaking about in these last times. When everything seems to be descending into chaos, when everything seems to be going away from the glory of God, we remind ourselves of this.

We are waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. That he is coming. And that he will restore all things for his people.

a people who are led to eternal life through faith in him. And as we hold on to these things, build ourselves up in these things, it reminds us to have mercy, as he says, on those who doubt.

[56 : 37] To save others by snatching them out of the fire. To others show mercy with fear, hating even the garments stained by the flesh.

The more we see the love of God, the more we see the fact that he is coming and that there is eternal life for those who believe, we also see that there are people who are perishing.

Perishing in their ignorance as he speaks and describes them off in the earlier verses. So much of what they are doing is out of ignorance. And so he reminds us here that we are a people who, as we know the love of God, are to share that love of God as well.

Build yourselves up, he says. When you see young children, whether it's your own children or maybe helping in creche and tweenies and these things, whenever you see children, they're so often attracted to building blocks, whether it's Lego or blocks, they just love to build things.

And only often is to build as high as they can. And well, as children of God, we too are deciding, or should decide, to build ourselves to, to build ourselves in our most holy faith, putting all these building blocks together to make sure that we are doing our part, that our love for our Lord is showing itself in all of these ways.

[58 : 16] A love for the word, a love for prayer, keeping yourselves in the love of God, reminding ourselves of that, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, and having mercy on those who we see around us as lost.

Build yourselves up in the most holy faith. faith. Then we move from this. You think it's all about us and what we do, and we know it's not, and that's how Jude closes his letter.

We are reminded of the things that we are to do. You, but you must remember the predictions, but you build yourselves up in the faith, but then we are reminded finally that it is the Lord who keeps us.

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy.

So it is him who is able to keep us. And we are reminded of that, and there's great comfort to us here.

- [59 : 33] How are we going to keep on? Well, if it's all about ourselves, we'll fall short. But you remember the teachings of the apostles, we'll forget certain things.
- We'll worry about certain things. But you, beloved, build yourselves up. So often we'll fail in that area too. But God knows.
- And that's why it is him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless. it's not ourselves coming and saying, here is what I've done.
- But we can say, Lord, in my imperfect love for you, in all my failings before you, I come not through myself, but presented blameless through you.
- For you have promised to keep me, that you will keep all who put their trust in you. And there's much power and there's much comfort in these words.
- [60 : 41] It's a benediction. It's a blessing on God's people. And that's the way Jude concludes this letter, with these powerful words.
- It's a letter of urgent warnings about our own responsibilities, but it's a letter too reminding us that it is him who keeps us.
- And when you think of these words, now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling. Stumbling, again, we come back to thinking about a child.
- And so often when I think of these words, it reminds me of a child learning to ride their bike. How little by little they learn to ride, first maybe with both stabilizers on, a little bit wobbly.
- then one stabilizer is taken off and they'll be stumbling then. And then the time will come when both stabilizers come off and the child is wobbling from side to side.
- [61 : 45] But as a parent, as a father or a mother, you take hold of the seat or you go alongside them, you keep them from stumbling. It's almost like that is the image that we have here.
- Him who is able to keep you from stumbling. Him who is with you always. The one who is able to keep you.
- The one who we see described as having his everlasting arms underneath. The one who keeps his people.
- And so we are to follow the example of Jude himself here. The one who persevered in the faith and the hard work of the Christian life.
- But the one who is able to praise God in the midst of it all. So how do we persevere? How then do we keep on?
- [62 : 44] We remember, beloved, the predictions. We remember, beloved, that we are to build ourselves up in the most holy faith.
- But above all, we remember him, who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy.
- We have a God who is able to keep us. Here, before us this night, we have a letter. And on this letter, it says, this is on his majesty's service.
- verse, it's not to be ignored. So the question is, but you. What will you do with this word?
- Will you ignore it and put it away? Or will you open your heart to receive this word and see as a people what we are to do to keep ourselves, us, but above all to see what God has done to keep us from stumbling and that he is able to keep us for all eternity.
- [64 : 02] May we hear what God the Lord is saying and put our trust in him. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, we rejoice that you are a God who speaks and who has not kept silent, that you have not turned away from us, but that you are a God who is calling his people to heed your word, to hear what you are saying as our Lord and as our King.

And so help us to hear that you are calling to us as a people, every one of us, but you this evening. What will you do? So Lord, bless us, we pray, and guide us in all of these things, forgiving our sins, in Jesus' name.

Amen. We're going to conclude by singing to God's praise in Psalm 139, page 433, Psalm 139, at verse 16 down to verse 18, the tune is Weatherby.

This is Psalm reminds us that the Lord knows that every circumstance, even as we see in these verses that we are formed in the innermost part, we are formed in his knowledge of us.

Thine eyes my substance did behold, yet being unperfect, and in the volume of thy book my members all were writh, which after continuance were fashioned every one, when as they yet as shapeless were, and of them there was none.

[65 : 41] But yet we see how precious also are your thoughts, O gracious God, to me, and in their sum how passing great and numberless they be.

So we'll sing from verse 16 to 18 to God's praise. Amen. Thy night my substance still behold, yet and he added, and in his ■ order hold high of my members of wherein chacun We chapter in continuous Where passion gave me war

When us created all shameless were And nothing there was none How precious also I thought O gracious God to me And in their song How vows sing great How dumb their heads believe If I should count the path

The sound they would Lord in number be What time so ever Nigh away I am the one with thee After the benediction I'll go to the door to my left We'll close with the benediction Now may grace, mercy and peace from God Father, Son and Holy Spirit Rest upon and abide with you all Now and forever more Amen Amen Amen Amen

Amen Thank you.