

The Epistle Of Jude



Sermon Outlines

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The Epistle Of Jude

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Called! Sanctified! And Preserved!

Jude 1-2

INTRODUCTION

1. In several passages throughout the New Testament, we find serious warnings about impending apostasy...
 - a. Jesus warned that false prophets would arise, the love of many would grow cold, and only those who endure to the end would be saved - **Mt 24:11-13**
 - b. Paul foretold of many disciples being drawn away - **Ac 20:29-30**
 - c. Peter warned about the rise of false teachers, and how many would follow their destructive ways - **2 Pe 2:1-3**
2. But by the time the epistles of John and Jude were written, the danger was no longer impending, it was very much in existence...
 - a. Antichrists were present, and false prophets were in the world - **1 Jn 2:18; 4:1; 2 Jn 7**
 - b. Jude was forced to change his original purpose to deal with the crisis - **Ju 3-4**
3. If the danger of apostasy was already present in the First Century A.D....
 - a. We should not be surprised that the dangers exists in the twentieth century!
 - b. We would do well to pay close heed to those epistles written to tell us how to deal with it
4. That makes **The Epistle Of Jude** especially relevant, and with this lesson we begin a series of expository sermons based upon its contents
5. In **verses 1-2**, Jude begins his letter in typical fashion:
 - a. He identifies himself...
 - 1) As “a servant of Jesus Christ” and “brother of James”
 - 2) It is considered very likely that James was the brother of the Lord who had become very prominent in the church at Jerusalem - cf. **Ga 1:16; 2:9**
 - 3) This would mean Jude was also a brother to the Lord Jesus - cf. also **Mt 13:54-56**
 - 4) That Judas would describe himself as a servant of the Lord and not His brother is typical of the modesty shown by James as well - **Ja 1:1**
 - b. He then addresses his original readers...
 - 1) No particular church or individuals are named
 - 2) They are simply **“those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ:”**
 - 3) For this reason, the epistle of Jude has been categorized as a catholic, or general, epistle (like James, 1 & 2 Peter, and 1st John)
 - c. He concludes his salutation with a threefold benediction: “Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you”
6. Before we go any further, the manner in which Jude addressed his readers is worthy of careful notice...

- a. Jude's purpose is to warn of those "ungodly men" who have crept in
- b. That a warning is necessary suggests a danger that is real: being led away from the faith
- c. Yet Jude uses terms in his address that some would say teaches the impossibility of apostasy (especially the phrase: *"preserved in Jesus Christ"*)

[Therefore I would like for us to focus on the concepts suggested by the three words in the title of our study: **"Called! Sanctified! And Preserved!"** Let's begin with the idea of Christians being...]

I. THOSE WHO ARE "CALLED"

A. THOSE IN CHRIST HAVE BEEN "CALLED"...

1. We have been called with "a holy calling" - **2 Ti 1:9**
2. This calling was not according to our meritorious works
3. It was according to God's own purpose and grace before time began

B. THIS "CALL" CAME THROUGH THE GOSPEL...

1. We became God's chosen and called through the means of the gospel - **2 Th 2:13-14**
2. By having the gospel preached to "every creature", the call is made available to all - cf. **Mk 16:15-16**
 - a. This is consistent with God's desire that "all men be saved" - **1 Ti 2:3-4**
 - b. This is consistent with God's offer of His Son as "a ransom for all" - **1 Ti 2:5-6**
 - c. This is consistent with the Lord's unwillingness that "any should perish", but that "all should come to repentance" - **2 Pe 3:9**

C. OUR RESPONSIBILITY, HAVING ACCEPTED THE "CALL", IS TO MAKE OUR "CALLING AND ELECTION SURE"...

1. This requires much diligence on our part - **2 Pe 1:10-11**
2. Otherwise, we will be like the Israelites in the wilderness - **He 3:12-19; 4:1-2,11**
 - a. All were called by God to enter the Promised Land of rest
 - b. But most were unable to enter because of unbelief that led to lack of diligence!

[It is the need for faithful diligence that explains the many warnings against apostasy found in the Scriptures. It also helps to understand why Jude felt it necessary to write his epistle! Closely related to the concept of being "called", is the idea that by God's grace we are also...]

II. "SANCTIFIED" BY GOD THE FATHER

A. THE WORDS "SANCTIFY", "SANCTIFICATION"...

1. Are translated from the Greek word "hagiazō" {hag-ee-ad'-zo }
2. Which means to make holy, to set apart for a special purpose
3. Therefore, God has set apart those who have been called - **Ju 1**

B. THE PROCESS OF SANCTIFICATION...

1. Is said to be the work of the Holy Spirit
 - a. "sanctified by the Holy Spirit" - **Ro 15:16**
 - b. "sanctified...by the Spirit of our God" - **1 Co 6:11**

- c. “sanctification by the Spirit” - **2 Th 2:13**
- d. “the sanctifying work of the Spirit” (NASV) - **1 Pe 1:2**
- 2. Is also said to be the work of the Word of God
 - a. “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.” - **Jn 17:17**
 - b. “that He might sanctify...by the word” - **Ep 5:26**
- 3. Since the Word of God is said to be the “sword of the Spirit” (**Ep 6:17**), the Word is evidently the instrument used by the Spirit to help bring about our sanctification

C. THE PROGRESS OF SANCTIFICATION...

- 1. Some people understand “sanctification” as “all at once” or “in two stages” (e.g., the Wesleyan concept of entire sanctification)
- 2. The Biblical evidence suggests otherwise:
 - a. The church at Corinth was made up of members...
 - 1) Who were “sanctified in Christ Jesus” - **1 Co 1:2**
 - 2) Who had been “sanctified” - **1 Co 6:11**
 - b. Yet, many of these members were “babes in Christ” and “carnal” - **1 Co 3:1-3**
- 3. As written to the Hebrews, those in Christ are “being sanctified” - **He 2:11**
 - a. I.e., sanctification is an ongoing process
 - b. It begins at conversion, and continues as we grow in the faith
- 4. As Paul prayed for the Thessalonians : *“may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely”* - **1 Th 5:23**

[Whether God does indeed complete the process of sanctification for those who are called will be determined by whether or not we remain “preserved in Christ Jesus”. (**Ju 1**) So let’s take a closer look at what is involved with being...]

III. “PRESERVED” IN JESUS CHRIST

A. THE MEANING OF THE WORD “PRESERVED”...

- 1. It comes from the Greek word “tereo” {tay-reh’-o}
- 2. Which means “to guard (from loss or injury)”
- 3. It is used to describe that which is closely watched and guarded...
 - a. Such as those disobedient angels who are awaiting the Judgment Day - **Ju 6**
 - b. Such as the punishment awaiting “ungodly men” - **Ju 13**

B. THIS WORD SPEAKS OF OUR WONDERFUL ASSURANCE IN CHRIST...

- 1. We are being carefully “guarded” in Christ!
- 2. Peter uses a different word (phroureo, froo-reh’-o) to express a similar idea - **1 Pe 1:5**
- 3. Paul used yet another word (sozo, sode’-zo) to express his own confidence in God’s preservation - **2 Ti 4:18**
- 3. Indeed, Jesus reassured his disciples that no one could “snatch” them out of His hand - cf. **Jn 10:27-29**
- But does this mean that it is impossible to fall away? Do we have no personal responsibility to remain “preserved in Jesus Christ”?

C. THERE IS SOME PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY...

1. Jude uses the same word for “preserved” in **Ju 21**: “keep yourselves...”
2. This indicates that we must cooperate with God
 - a. As Peter indicated, we are “kept by the power of God through faith” - **1 Pe 1:5**
 - 1) God provides the power to keep us safe
 - 2) But we must provide the faith
 - b. Jesus’ teaching on security is for those who are “believers”
 - 1) No one can “snatch” us away from God against our will
 - 2) But what if “believers” become “unbelievers”?
 - a) Does the promise still apply if the conditions have changed?
 - b) What we choose to leave or jump out of God’s protective hand?
 - c. That “believers” can become “unbelievers”, and thereby in danger of losing one’s salvation, is clearly taught in **He 3:12-19; 4:1-2,11**
3. Thus we are “preserved in Jesus Christ”...
 - a. But remaining “preserved” involves personal responsibility!
 - b. It requires that we “keep ourselves” in the love of God!

CONCLUSION

1. We who are in Christ are indeed richly blessed:
 - a. We have been “**called**” by the gospel of Christ, to which call we responded when we obeyed the conditions of the gospel (faith, repentance, confession, and baptism)
 - b. We have been “**sanctified**” or set apart for a holy purpose by God the Father, as He works upon us through His Holy Spirit in conjunction with His Holy Word
 - c. On the basis of our faith, we are “**preserved**” in Jesus Christ unto eternal life
2. But dear brethren, forces of Satan are very much at work...
 - a. They seek to undermine our faith in Christ
 - b. They seek to harden our hearts, and to develop an evil heart of unbelief
 - c. They seek to make us spiritually lazy, and not to maintain the diligence necessary to keep ourselves in the love of God
3. Yet God in His grace has preserved His Word to give us ample warning; shall we not heed the warnings found throughout His Word, such as those found in The Epistle of Jude?

And as we speak of giving heed... Have you given heed to the call of the gospel of Christ? - cf. **Ac 2: 36-38**

Contending Earnestly For The Faith

Jude 3-4

INTRODUCTION

1. As we begin to focus on the purpose of The Epistle Of Jude, we see that his original desire was to write about our common salvation shared in Christ:

“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.” - Ju 3

2. The need to change his purpose is seen in the next verse:

“For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.” - Ju 4

3. That such men “crept in unnoticed” should give us pause...
 - a. That such could happen, despite the many warnings given by Jesus, Paul, and Peter
 - b. How much easier, then, for this to happen today when we live in time far removed from those initial warnings!
4. In light of this, Jude’s call to “contend earnestly for the faith” becomes even more relevant for us today...
 - a. We ought to appreciate “the need” to contend for the faith
 - b. We should understand “the how” when it comes to contending earnestly for the faith

[In this study, “**Contending Earnestly For The Faith**”, it is “the need” and “the how” that we examine more closely...]

I. THE “NEED” TO CONTEND EARNESTLY FOR THE FAITH

A. SOME WILL DENY THE ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF THE SCRIPTURES

1. This I infer from the phrase *“the faith which once for all delivered to the saints”*
 - a. The expression “once for all” can rightly be worded **“one time for all time”**
 - b. That is, “the faith” (that body of doctrine which we are to believe) was delivered to the church “one time for all time”
 - Revelation was not to be repeated, nor was there more to be revealed later on!
2. That God has revealed all that He would have us know is evident from such statements like those of:
 - a. Paul, telling the Ephesian elders he had not shunned to proclaim “the whole counsel of God” - **Ac 20:27**
 - b. Peter, writing that God has given us “all things that pertain to life and godliness” - **2 Pe**

1:3

- If we have “all things”, and if we have the “whole counsel of God”, what else is there?
- 3. Thus the Scriptures, which contain the faith delivered “once for all”, contains all we need to become what God wants of us! - cf. **2 Ti 3:16-17**
- 4. But when people suggest:
 - a. That God’s revelation is incomplete, or it is still in progress
 - b. Or that God’s revelation needs to be repeated
- Then our task is to “contend earnestly for the faith once delivered”!

B. SOME WILL PERVERT THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE...

1. There were those in Jude’s day “*who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness (lewdness)*”
 - a. Their doctrine of grace gave them excuse to sin
 - b. So much so, that they engaged in that which was openly shameful (lewd)
 - Perhaps they said: “**Let us sin so that grace may abound!**”
2. There are some today who pervert the grace of God...
 - a. To excuse their disregard for the commands found in God’s Word
 - b. To justify their lifestyle that is contrary to the principles of the Bible
 - For they are likely to say: “**God is too loving, His grace is too wonderful, to condemn us when we are so sincere!**”
3. But those who “contend earnestly for the faith” will be ever mindful of what the grace of God truly teaches - cf. **Ti 2:11-12**
 - a. To deny ungodliness and worldly lusts!
 - b. To live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age!

C. SOME WILL DENY GOD’S AUTHORITY...

1. Jude had to deal with those who “*deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ*”
 - a. The emphasis appears to be on the term “Lord”, used to describe God and Jesus
 - b. The term “lord” comes from **kurios** {koo’-ree-os}
 - 1) Which is related to the word **kuros** (supremacy)
 - 2) Meaning “supreme in authority”
 - c. These people were denying the authority rightly belonging to God and Jesus
2. Today we often face people denying the authority of God and Jesus
 - a. By their lack of respect to the Word of God
 - b. By their setting up other standards of authority for what they believe or do
 - 1) Such as a synod, convention, council
 - 2) Such as a pope, bishop, minister, or their own person
3. But those who “contend earnestly for the faith once delivered”...
 - a. Will recognize the authority which belongs to Christ - **Mt 28:18; Ep 1:21-22**
 - b. Will recognize the authority delegated to His apostles - **Jn 13:20; 1 Co 14:37; 1 Th 2:13; Ac 2:42**

[Clearly the need to “contend earnestly for the faith” is present, for just as there were those in Jude’s day who...

- denied the all-sufficiency of God’s Word
- perverted the doctrine of grace

- denied the authority of God and Jesus

...so there are such people today! How then shall we do it?]

II. THE “HOW” TO CONTEND EARNESTLY FOR THE FAITH

A. WE MUST CONTEND EARNESTLY...

1. From the “Believers’ Study Bible”:
 - a. *The vivid expression epagonizomai (Gk.) is translated “contend earnestly” and is related to the English word “agony.”*
 - b. *The term is associated with strife and combat of a most vigorous and determined variety.*
 - c. *The present tense of the verb indicates that the Christian struggle is to be continuous.*
 - d. *Jude believed that the foundational tenets of the Christian faith were under attack. Nothing but vigorous counter-contention would be sufficient.*
 2. The use of such an expression therefore suggests:
 - a. The matter is serious; we are at war!
 - 1) Paul describes the nature of our warfare in **2 Co 10:3-6**
 - 2) And again in **Ep 6:10-13**
 - b. This is not a time to be unprepared; we must arm ourselves!
- We must therefore contend with vigor, even to the point of agony, for “the faith once delivered to the saints”!

B. WE MUST USE THE WEAPONS AT OUR DISPOSAL...

1. Paul defines our weaponry in **Ep 6:13-18**
 - a. Girded with truth
 - b. The breastplate of righteousness
 - c. Feet shod with the gospel of peace
 - d. The shield of faith
 - e. The helmet of salvation
 - f. The sword of the Spirit, the Word of God
 - g. Watching with all prayer
2. Notice that most of these things are for our own defense, lest we be lost in the struggle!
 - a. The elements of truth, righteousness, the gospel, faith, salvation, etc., are needed for our own salvation as much as for those we seek to conquer
 - b. Make sure that you let them “remove the plank for your own eye” so you will be able to see clear “to remove speck out of your brother’s eye” - cf. **Mt 7:3-5**
 - c. Some people are so quick to take up the “sword”, they leave the rest of their armor behind!
3. Paul also has something to say about other weapons that are “mighty in God”
 - a. Such qualities as “the meekness and gentleness of Christ” - **2 Co 10:1-6**
 - b. Making sure that we are first “spiritual”, and then displaying gentleness and caution - **Ga 6:1**
 - c. Refraining from quarrels, applying gentleness, the Word, with patience and humility correcting the opposition - **2 Ti 2:23-26**

CONCLUSION

1. The call to “contend earnestly for the faith” is not a license to engage in “contentions” and “outbursts of wrath” - cf. **Ga 5:19-21; 1 Co 3:1-3**
2. But it is a call to vigorously contend with all the weapons at our disposal...
 - a. First and foremost, with the Word of God, applied first to self and then to others
 - b. But also, with the Christ-like qualities that are “mighty in God” to win people over to obedience to Christ
3. It is the fact...
 - a. That many are not obeying Christ as Lord
 - b. But perverting His teaching or setting themselves up as their own authority
...that makes it necessary that we “*contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints*”

Dear friend, whose side of this battle are **you** on? Have you submitted to Him whom God has made both Lord and Christ? Are you continuing steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine? - cf. **Ac 2:36-42**

Reminders Of God's Righteous Condemnation

Jude 5-7

INTRODUCTION

1. Exhorting his readers to “contend earnestly for the faith”, in **verse 4** Jude introduces the reason for them to take such a stand...
 - a. “Certain men” have crept in unnoticed
 - b. They were “ungodly men”, guilty of:
 - 1) Turning the grace of God into lewdness
 - 2) Denying the Lord God and the Lord Jesus Christ
2. Jude also writes of these men that they were “long ago marked out for this condemnation”
 - a. Some might infer that Jude meant that these men were predestined to act this way
 - b. However, as Warren Wiersbe in *The Bible Exposition Commentary* correctly states:

“Jude did not write that these men were ordained to become apostates, as though God were responsible for their sin. They became apostates because they willfully turned away from the truth. But God did ordain that such people would be judged and condemned. The old Testament prophets denounced the false prophets of their day, and both Jesus Christ and His Apostles pronounced judgment on them.”
 - c. Yes, what is ordained is their punishment, that those who turn from God will not escape His righteous condemnation!
3. To reinforce his point, Jude reminds his readers of three examples in which the ungodly did not escape God's righteous condemnation - **Ju 5-7**
 - a. Israel in the wilderness
 - b. The angels who sinned
 - c. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah
4. That we might be reminded as well, in this study we shall briefly review what is known about these three “case histories” of divine judgment, and draw some points that can be gleaned from them...
 - a. If you feel a sense of “deja vu”, it may be because Jude follows a pattern set by Peter in his second epistle - **2 Pe 2:4-6**
 - b. Jude's action is understandable, as he is warning against the very presence of those Peter had warned would one day come

[There is a difference, however. Whereas Peter used as one of his examples the people destroyed in the flood, Jude selects the example of...]

I. ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS (5)

A. THE PARTICULARS OF THIS EXAMPLE...

1. A well known event in Israel's history, God "saved" the nation by bringing them out of the land of Egypt
2. Yet despite their being recipients of His wonderful grace, God "destroyed" those who did not believe
 - a. Their lack of faith required that they wander for 40 years in the wilderness
 - b. So that those over the age of 20 when they left Egypt, none but two (Joshua and Caleb) entered the Promised Land
3. The final "tally": 603,550 men were "saved", but then 603,548 were "destroyed"

B. THE POINT TO BE MADE FROM THIS EXAMPLE...

1. God may destroy those He has saved!
 - a. Paul made this point in writing to the Corinthians - **1 Co 10:1-12**
 - b. The writer to the Hebrews made the same point - **He 3:12-4:2,11**
2. The reason? Lack of obedient faith!
 - a. *"God destroyed those who did not believe"* - **Ju 5**
 - b. *"they could not enter in because of unbelief"* - **He 3:18-19**
3. While the Bible teaches "the security of the believer" (cf. **1 Pe 1:5**)...
 - a. It warns against the believer developing a heart of unbelief
 - b. It teaches "the insecurity of the unbeliever"
4. Therefore the Biblical admonition: *"...let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall."* - **1 Co 10:12**
5. A recurring theme throughout the New Testament is this: "Remember what happened to Israel!"

[Having reminded his readers that the example of Israel shows the possibility of "once saved, but destroyed", he then provides an example that shows God has a place reserved for the wicked...]

II. THE ANGELS WHO SINNED (6)

A. THE PARTICULARS OF THIS EXAMPLE...

1. Very little is known from the Scriptures themselves
 - a. As described by Jude, there were angels who:
 - 1) *"did not keep their proper domain"*
 - 2) *"left their own habitation"*
 - b. Peter simply writes that the angels "sinned" - **2 Pe 2:4**
 - c. A very old interpretation is that Jude refers to what is described in **Gen 6:1-4**
 - 1) Where "sons of God" is understood to refer to angels (as used in **Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7**) who cohabited with the "daughters of men"
 - 2) This interpretation of **Gen 6:1-4** is common in Jewish literature (**Enoch 7; 9:8; 10:11; 12:4**), and Jude appears to quote from such literature later in **verse 14**
 - 3) It is also found in inter-testamental literature and the early church fathers (e.g., Justin in his **Apology 2:5**)
 - 4) It fits in with the connection Jude later makes with the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah, that they had "gone after strange flesh" - **Ju 7**
2. What is clearer about these angels is their condemnation
 - a. God has them "in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day"

- b. As worded by Peter in **2 Pe 2:4**, God...
 - 1) *“cast them down to hell”*
 - a) The word for “hell” is tartaroo {tar-tar-o’-o}
 - b) “Tartarus, thought of by the Greeks as a subterranean place lower than Hades where divine punishment was meted out, was so regarded in Jewish apocalyptic as well.” (BAG, p. 813)
 - 2) *“delivered them to chains of darkness”* (NIV renders it “gloomy dungeons”)
 - 3) *“to be reserved for judgment”*
 - a) As Jude puts it, “for the judgment of the great day”
 - b) Similar to the scene described in **Lk 16:19-31**, where the wicked rich man was in torment awaiting the judgment at the Last Day

B. THE POINT TO BE MADE FROM THIS EXAMPLE...

1. God is prepared to render everlasting punishment to the wicked!
 - a. He has the angels in “everlasting chains under darkness” - **Ju 6**
 - b. For the “ungodly men” described later, He has “reserved the blackness of darkness forever” - **Ju 13**
2. Just as He had a place prepared for the angels who sinned, so He has a place prepared for the wicked and unbelievers! - cf. **Re 21:8**

[So God has demonstrated that He is prepared to punish the wicked. That He will do so is emphasized with one more example: The judgment that came upon...]

III. THE CITIES OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH (7)

A. THE PARTICULARS OF THIS EXAMPLE...

1. The judgment against these cities is vividly described in **Gen 19:24-28**
2. Why this terrible judgment?
 - a. The LORD said it was *“because their sin is very grievous”* - **Gen 18:20**
 - b. Jude says that *“in a similar manner to these”* (the angels who sinned), they had:
 - 1) *“given themselves over to sexual immorality”*
 - 2) *“gone after strange flesh”*
 - c. We see a sample of this in **Gen 19:4-11**

B. THE POINT TO BE MADE FROM THIS EXAMPLE...

1. Both Peter and Jude make the point that Sodom and Gomorrah are an “example”
 - a. Peter, an example *“to those who afterward would live ungodly”* - **2 Pe 2:6**
 - b. Jude, an example of those *“suffering the vengeance of eternal fire”* - **Ju 7**
2. I.e., God has given us an example of the eternal fire awaiting the subjects of His righteous vengeance!

CONCLUSION

1. We may be like the original recipients of Jude’s letter, well acquainted with these events...
 - a. But Jude wanted to “remind” them - **Ju 5**
 - b. And we need to be reminded often as well!

2. And what is it that we need to remember?
 - a. **Remember Israel**, as an example of those once saved who were destroyed for lack of faith!
 - b. **Remember the angels who sinned**, as an example of those whose incarceration tells us God has a place prepared for the wicked!
 - c. **Remember Sodom and Gomorrah**, as an example that God will not withhold the vengeance of eternal fire when the time is right!

3. It is only when we keep such events in mind that we will...
 - a. Take serious the warnings about those who would lead us astray!
 - b. Take serious the admonitions designed to keep us preserved in Jesus Christ!

Are you letting these examples serve their intended purpose? Will you let them motivate you to make whatever changes need to be made in your life? The “judgment of the great day” draws nearer...

The Ungodly Dreamers

Jude 8-16,19

INTRODUCTION

1. So far in this epistle, we have noticed that Jude has...
 - a. Exhorted his readers to *“contend earnestly for the faith”* - **Ju 3**
 - b. Made mention of *“ungodly men”* who have *“crept in unnoticed”* - **Ju 4**
 - 1) Men who *“turn the grace of our God into licentiousness”*
 - 2) And who *“deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ”*
 - c. Reminded them of examples of God’s righteous condemnation in the past - **Ju 5-7**
 - 1) The nation of Israel in the wilderness
 - 2) The angels who sinned
 - 3) The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah
2. At this point, Jude follows the example set by Peter (cf. **2 Pe 2:10-17**) and describes these “ungodly men” - **Ju 8-17,19**
 - a. In doing so, Jude does more than simply repeat Peter
 - b. He reinforces Peter’s words and adds more information about these “ungodly men”
3. In this study we shall consider Jude’s description of these “ungodly dreamers”, noticing that what is said of them is summarized in **verse 8**:
 - a. They *“defile the flesh”*
 - b. They *“reject authority”*
 - c. They *“speak evil”*

[As Jude elaborates, he starts with the last of these, how...]

I. THEY “SPEAK EVIL” (8-11)

A. OF DIGNITARIES... (8-9)

1. The word “dignitaries” comes from **doxa {dox’-ah}**, meaning “dignity, glory (-ious), honor, praise, worship”
 - a. It can refer to angelic beings, or those in positions of authority
 - b. In either case, these “ungodly dreamers” would not hesitate to speak evil
2. To illustrate the folly of their behavior, the dispute over the body of Moses is given:
 - a. Michael, the archangel, dared not bring a reviling accusation against the devil
 - b. Saying only *“The Lord rebuke you”*
 - How foolish, then, for these “dreamers” to speak evil of those in authority

B. OF WHATEVER THEY DO NOT KNOW... (10-11)

1. Unafraid to speak evil of dignitaries, they do not hesitate to speak evil of things they know nothing about!
2. And what they know naturally, in that they corrupt themselves! - cf. **2 Pe 2:12**

3. In conducting themselves in this manner...
 - a. They have gone in **the way of Cain**
 - 1) Whose works were evil - **1 Jn 3:12**
 - 2) Who did not act out of faith - cf. **He 11:4**
 - b. They have run greedily in **the error of Balaam** for profit
 - 1) Who loved the wages of unrighteousness - **2 Pe 2:15-16**
 - 2) Who put a stumbling block before the children of Israel - cf. **Re 2:14**
 - c. They have perished in **the rebellion of Korah**
 - 1) A rebellion that was ostensibly against Moses and Aaron - **Num 16:1-45**
 - 2) But was really against the Lord Himself - cf. **Num 26:9**

C. DOES THIS NOT CAUTION US ON HOW WE SPEAK OF OTHERS...?

1. James warned us about the dangers...
 - a. Of the tongue - **Ja 3:2-12**
 - b. Of speaking evil of brethren - **Ja 4:11-12; 5:9**
2. Paul also wrote Titus to counsel Christians not to speak evil others - **Ti 3:1-2**
- When we add the example of the “ungodly dreamers” and their quickness to speak evil of others, shouldn’t we be very cautious how we speak of others?

[As we continue, we also notice concerning these “ungodly dreamers” that...]

II. THEY “DEFILE THE FLESH” (12-15,19)

A. THEY WERE “SPOTS” IN THE LOVE FEASTS... (12,19)

1. Feasting “*without fear, serving only themselves*”; they were also “*sensual persons*”
2. In prophesying of their behavior, Peter elaborates:
 - a. “*carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you*” - **2 Pe 2:13**
 - b. “*having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, beguiling unstable souls*” - **2 Pe 2:14**
3. They took advantage of brethren’s hospitality to engage in their lustful thoughts

B. THE EXTENT OF THEIR DEPRAVITY VIVIDLY ILLUSTRATED... (12-13)

1. “*Clouds without water, carried about by the winds*”
 - a. Offering promise of blessing
 - b. But not leaving any
2. “*Late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots*”
 - a. Barren when fruit should be expected
 - b. But even worse, beyond fruit-bearing because they are dead and cut off from any source of nourishment
3. “*Raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame*”
 - a. Like the flotsam and jetsam spewed by the waves
 - b. So their shame comes forth by their words and behavior
4. “*Wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever*”
 - a. Shining for a moment
 - b. But without direction or orbit, they will eventually be gone forever!

C. THEIR CONDEMNATION PROPHESED LONG AGO... (14-15)

1. By Enoch, the man “who walked with God; and he was not, because God took him” - cf. **Gen 5:24**
2. Enoch prophesied of the Lord’s Coming...
 - a. Coming with ten thousands of His saints (angels?) - cf. **1 Th 3:13; 2 Th 1:7**
 - b. Coming to execute judgment on all - cf. **2 Th 1:8-9**
 - c. Coming to convict all who are ungodly (such as these ungodly dreamers)
 - 1) Of their ungodly deeds committed in an ungodly way
 - 2) Of harsh things spoken against the Lord by ungodly sinners

[So the judgment is sure upon these “ungodly dreamers” who speak evil and defile the flesh. But if that were not bad enough, we also learn from Jude that...]

III. THEY “REJECT AUTHORITY” (16,19)**A. EVIDENCED BY THE WAY THEY SPEAK...**

1. We have seen that they were quick to speak evil, contrary to apostolic teaching
2. Jude’s description of them as “murmurers, complainers” also shows a lack of respect for apostolic authority - cf. **1 Co 10:10; Ph 2:14**
3. Their use of flattery likewise was condemned by the apostles - cf. **Ro 16:17-18**

B. EVIDENCED BY THE WAY THEY WALK...

1. “*Walking according to their own lusts*”, as “*sensual persons*”, clearly this was a rejection of apostolic authority and teaching - cf. **1 Pe 2:11; 1:14**
2. The same was true in “*causing divisions*” - **Ro 16:17-18**

CONCLUSION

1. The last phrase of **verse 19** truly sums up the condition of these “ungodly dreamers”: “*...not having the Spirit*”
 - a. Yes, when they “*defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil...*” - **Ju 8**
 - b. They demonstrate that they are walking “*according to the lusts of the flesh*”, not “*according to the Spirit*” - cf. **Ga 5:16-23**
2. The end of these “ungodly dreamers” is clearly stated in the Scriptures...
 - a. As emphasized by the apostle Paul: “*those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God*” - **Ga 5:21**
 - b. As stated by Peter: “*...to whom the gloom of darkness is reserved forever.*” - **2 Pe 2:17**
 - c. As stated by Jude: “*...for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever*” - **Ju 15**
3. In our next study, we shall consider Jude’s counsel on how we can avoid being misled by such “ungodly dreamers”

Does Jude’s characterization of these “ungodly dreamers” hit a little too close to home in some areas? If they do, why not make things right with God...?

Exhortations To The Beloved

Jude 17-23

INTRODUCTION

1. Up to this point, Jude has established the “need” for his readers to contend earnestly for the faith...
 - a. With reminders of God’s righteous condemnation of the ungodly - **Ju 5-7**
 - b. With a vivid depiction of the ungodly men who have crept in unnoticed - **Ju 9-16,19**
2. Now Jude provides a series of exhortations designed to make sure that they stand strong in the faith “once for all delivered to the saints” - **Ju 17-23**
3. Twice in these verses, Jude addresses his readers as “beloved” - **Ju 17,20**
 - a. As an appellation, the term “beloved” is used frequently in the Scriptures
 - 1) By Paul in **Ro 12:19**
 - 2) By the author of Hebrews - **He 6:9**
 - 3) By Peter in **1 Pe 2:11**
 - 4) By John - **1 Jn 4:1,7,11**
 - 5) And by Jude at the beginning of his epistle in **Ju 3**
 - b. It describes those so addressed as being very dear to the heart of the one using it
4. It is with such love in his heart that we find Jude giving the exhortations necessary to keep from being misled by the ungodly

[As we consider these “**Exhortations To The Beloved**”, let us bear in mind that as God’s children we too are “beloved” (beloved of God - **Ro 1:7**) and that these exhortations are therefore directed to us as well. The first exhortation, designed to keep us from stumbling, is to...]

I. REMEMBER THE WORDS SPOKEN BEFORE (17-18)

A. REMEMBER WHO SPOKE THEM...

1. They were the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ
2. That is, those duly appointed and sent out by Jesus Himself
3. To heed them is to heed the Lord Himself - cf. **Jn 13:20**

B. REMEMBER WHAT THEY SAID...

1. That there would be mockers in the last time - cf. **2 Pe 3:1-3**
2. That they would walk according to their own ungodly lusts - cf. **2 Ti 3:1-5; 4:3-4**

[For us today, we must remember what they wrote. This implies diligent study of the Word of God on our part. The need for such study is also implied in the next exhortation...]

II. BUILD YOURSELVES UP IN THE MOST HOLY FAITH (20)

A. TO “BUILD UP” SUGGESTS GROWTH...

1. It is not enough to just lay down one level of knowledge and understanding
2. We must continue to build upon it, as Peter expressed it: “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” - **2 Pe 3:18**
3. We therefore need to take advantage of opportunities to study and learn

B. TO BUILD UP “YOURSELVES” SUGGESTS PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY...

1. While God, family, and brethren will be there to encourage you
2. You must accept personal responsibility and make the effort

C. “THE MOST HOLY FAITH” IS THAT “FAITH ONCE DELIVERED...”

1. It is that body of doctrine in which our personal faith is to rest
2. It is that body of doctrine which has been revealed “one time for all times”
3. Which of course pertains to what our Lord Jesus Christ has done and will do for us!

[These first two exhortations stress the importance of our “continuing steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine” (**Ac 2:42**), that is, to study diligently and apply the Word of God to our lives. But Bible study alone will not suffice; there is also the need to...]

III. PRAY IN THE HOLY SPIRIT (20)**A. PRAYER IS THE NECESSARY COMPLEMENT TO THE WORD OF GOD...**

1. By the Word of God, God speaks to us; by prayer, we speak to God
2. The Word of God is a source of strength and comfort to us; but then, so also is prayer - cf. **Ph 4:6-7**
3. Think of prayer and the Word of God as the “two legs” upon which our spiritual well-being stands; both are need to be well-balanced in our spiritual growth

B. WHAT IS MEANT BY PRAYING “IN THE SPIRIT”?

1. Jude does not elaborate, nor does Paul, who uses the expression in **Ep 6:18**
2. But Paul does use the expression “walk in the Spirit” (**Ga 5:25**), which suggests walking or living according to the Spirit’s direction as found in the Word of God
3. Perhaps “praying in the Spirit” simply emphasizes that our prayers be in harmony with what the Spirit teaches in the Word of God, which is akin to what John wrote in **1 Jn 5:14**

[Diligent Bible study and prayer are certainly essential to keep from falling. But as we continue to consider Jude’s “**Exhortations To The Beloved**”, we learn there is more we need to do...]

IV. KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD (21)**A. AGAIN, WE SEE THE NEED FOR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY...**

1. We are called upon to “keep yourselves...”
2. The word for “keep” is the same word translated “preserved” in **Ju 1**
3. So while we are indeed “preserved in Jesus Christ”, our remaining preserved in Christ is affected by our willing cooperation with God
4. As Peter wrote, we are “kept by the power of God through faith” - **1 Pe 1:5**

- a. The power of God is the divine contribution to keeping us safe
- b. Remaining faithful is the human contribution to being kept safe

B. KEEPING OURSELVES IN GOD'S LOVE...

1. Jesus taught that keeping the commandments is the key to abiding in God's love
 - a. It is how we will be loved by our Father - **Jn 14:21,23**
 - b. It is how we will be loved by the Son - **Jn 15:9-10**
2. This is not legalism, but a simple recognition of the importance of doing what God (and Christ) commands...
 - a. Observing the commandments of Christ are an essential element of recognizing the Lord's authority and keeping the Great Commission - **Mt 28:18-20**
 - b. Keeping the commandments of God is what really matters, as far as Paul is concerned - **1 Co 7:19**
3. It is also the ultimate proof that we love God and His children - cf. **1 Jn 5:2-3**

[So to Bible study and prayer we must add the actual application of God's Word to our lives if we wish to keep from falling. But to avoid turning our efforts to keep the commandments of God into legalism or thinking that we somehow earn our salvation, we need to heed the next exhortation...]

V. LOOK FOR THE MERCY OF OUR LORD (21)

A. WE MUST ALWAYS BE LOOKING FORWARD...

1. Looking forward to "the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" - cf. **Ti 2:11-13**
2. Looking forward to "the coming of the day of God" - **2 Pe 3:10-12**
3. Looking for that "new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" - **2 Pe 3:13-14**

B. ESPECIALLY AS IT PERTAINS TO ETERNAL LIFE AND MERCY...

1. Eternal life is not something we earn, but is graciously given in Christ Jesus - **Ro 6:23**
2. We are saved, not by works of righteousness, but according to mercy, that we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal- **Ti 3:4-7**
3. Thus, the prayer that Paul had for Onesiphorus should be the prayer that we all have for ourselves: "*The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord in that Day*" - **2 Ti 1:18**

[The final exhortation speaks not so much to what we can do to keep ourselves from falling, but what we should do to save others in danger...]

VI. BE COMPASSIONATE, WITH FEAR (22-23)

A. THE NEED FOR COMPASSION...

1. First, to save ourselves, for mercy will only be shown to the merciful - **Ja 2:13**
2. But also to save those who are in danger
 - a. Compassion is needed to move us to action - cf. **Mt 9:36-10:1**
 - a. Compassion is needed to properly handle those in danger - **Ga 6:1; 2 Ti 2:24-25**

B. THE NEED FOR FEAR...

1. Lest we be caught up in the same error of the wicked - cf. **Ga 6:1**
2. That we might be motivated to persuade those in danger of being lost - cf. **2 Co 5:10-11**

CONCLUSION

1. Here then are Jude's final "**Exhortations To The Beloved**"...
 - a. Remember the words spoken before (**17-18**)
 - b. Build yourselves up in the most holy faith (**20**)
 - c. Pray in the spirit (**20**)
 - d. Keep yourselves in the love of God (**21**)
 - e. Look for the mercy of our Lord (**21**)
 - f. Be compassionate, with fear (**22-23**)
2. These exhortations might easily be called:
 - a. "How To Keep From Falling"
 - b. "How To Contend Earnestly For The Faith"-- For that is what Jude is seeking to do in writing these words of exhortation
3. Do we not see the need for heeding these same exhortations ourselves?
 - a. Do we not face the same danger today?
 - b. Do we not desire the same blessings promised to the original recipients of this letter?
4. May these words of Jude to his beloved serve as a guide for us today...
 - a. Imagine the blessedness of a congregation in which every member is heeding these exhortations!
 - b. Imagine the blessedness of seeing everyone in this congregation receiving the mercy of the Lord on that Day!

Beloved, are you keeping yourselves in the love of God today by keeping His commandments...?

Jude's Closing Doxology

Jude 24-25

INTRODUCTION

1. In the course of his short epistle, Jude has had to write some necessary, and to some degree, unpleasant things...
 - a. A plea to contend earnestly for the faith - **Ju 3**
 - b. A warning about ungodly men who have crept in unnoticed - **Ju 4**
 - c. A reminder of God's righteous condemnation in times past - **Ju 5-7**
 - d. A description of the depravity of the ungodly dreamers - **Ju 8-16**
 - e. Counsel on how to keep from stumbling - **Ju 17-23**
 - One might think that such unpleasant tasks would leave him in a depressed state of mind
2. Yet we find that Jude is moved to end his epistle with a "doxology"...
 - a. The word means "**An expression of praise to God**"
 - b. Doxologies are common in Scripture
 - 1) Usually at the end of an epistle - cf. **Ro 16:25-27**
 - 2) Sometimes in the middle of one - cf. **Ep 3:20-21**
 - c. The format of a doxology is usually in two parts:
 - 1) An address to the one being praised, including reasons for the praise being offered
 - 2) The expression of praise itself
3. In "**Jude's Closing Doxology**" (24-25), we find this epistle closing..
 - a. On a very high note, not in doubt and fear
 - b. With a beautiful expression of faith and hope
4. That we might be sure to live with a strong assurance of faith and hope, let's take a few moments to carefully examine this "expression of praise" preserved for us in this epistle

[Jude begins his doxology by describing...]

I. THE PERSON TO WHOM PRAISE IS ASCRIBED (24-25a)

A. "TO HIM WHO IS ABLE..."

1. "*to keep you from stumbling*"
 - a. That God is in view is evident from **verse 25**
 - b. But the emphasis appears to be on His ability to keep us from "stumbling"
 - 1) "stumbling" does not refer to the occasional sin
 - 2) But to stumble so as to fall away completely - cf. **2 Pe 1:10**
 - c. This is reassuring in an epistle filled with warning about ungodly men who would seek to lead one astray
 - d. God's ability to keep us from stumbling was implied at the very beginning of this epistle - cf. **Ju 1** ("*preserved in Jesus Christ*")

- e. But as we have suggested in previous lessons, our faith must cooperate with God's power if we are to keep from "stumbling" - cf. **1 Pe 1:5; 2 Pe 1:5-11**
- f. Indeed, we must heed the exhortations given by Jude himself:
 - 1) "Remember the words spoken before..." - **Ju 17**
 - 2) "building yourselves up on your most holy faith" - **Ju 20**
 - 3) "praying in the Holy Spirit" - **Ju 20**
 - 4) "keep yourselves in the love of God" - **Ju 21**
 - 5) "looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" - **Ju 21**
- g. If we continue in faith, heeding such exhortations, we know that God is able to keep us from falling!
- h. God's ability is stressed by Paul in his "doxology" - cf. **Ep 3:20-21**
- 2. ***"to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy"***
 - a. Here, the focus is on God's ability to produce the ultimate goal of redemption
 - b. That goal is expressed here as presenting us before God...
 - 1) ***"faultless"***
 - a) As Paul expressed it in **Ep 5:27**...
 - 1] ***"not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing"***
 - 2] ***"holy and without blemish"***
 - b) This is necessary if we are to be permitted in the presence of God's glory
 - 2) ***"with exceeding joy"***
 - a) Without a doubt this will be the condition of those so blessed!
 - b) But let's not discount the joy God will experience when He sees His redeemed ones at last!
 - c. Through His divine providence, God will bring His scheme of redemption to pass - cf. **Ro 8:28-30**

B. "TO GOD..."

- 1. ***"our Savior"***
 - a. At this point Jude is about to ascribe praise to God
 - b. So this phrase may be a summary description of what was stated in **verse 24**
 - c. I.e., that the God who is able to keep us from stumbling and present us faultless is truly our Savior!
- 2. ***"who alone is wise"***
 - a. His wisdom is seen in His ability to keep us from stumbling and present us faultless
 - b. Again, a summary description of God in view of **verse 24**

[Having described God, Jude proceeds to offer his praise. A feature noted in Jude's epistle is his love of triplets...

- His description of his readers - **Ju 1**
- His prayer for them - **Ju 2**
- His three examples of God's righteous condemnation - **Ju 5-7**
- His preliminary description of the ungodly dreamers - **Ju 8**
- His three examples of Old Testament apostates - **Ju 11**
- His summary description of the ungodly dreamers - **Ju 19**
- His threefold exhortation to his beloved - **Ju 20-21**

Now in His doxology, we find one more triplet, actually a triplet of doublets, being used in..]

II. THE PRAISE ASCRIBED TO GOD (25b)

A. “GLORY AND MAJESTY”...

1. “glory” comes from “doxa” {dox’-ah}, and is used to suggest dignity and honor
 2. “majesty” comes from “megalosune” {meg-al-o-soo’-nay}, meaning “greatness”
 3. These terms are closely related in concept, suggesting that which is worthy of awe, praise, and worship
- Thus Jude seeks to have all glory and majesty given to God

B. “DOMINION AND POWER”...

1. “dominion” is from “kratos” {krat’-os}, and means “might, power, strength”
 2. “power” is from “exousia” {ex-oo-see’-ah}, and refers to “authority, jurisdiction, liberty, power, right, strength”
 3. Also closely related in concept, the use of these words demonstrates that Jude recognizes that it is God who rightly deserves and exercises authority over all
- Not only does he recognize it, it is his fervent prayer that it continue (as we read on...)

C. “BOTH NOW AND FOREVER”...

1. Jude’s fervent prayer is that dominion and power, glory and majesty remain God’s
2. Not just for the present, but for eternity!

CONCLUSION

1. With a single word (“amen”, i.e., “so be it”), Jude ends his doxology and the epistle itself
2. And so it **will** be...
 - a. Despite the efforts of any to turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ
 - b. God will bring into judgment all who are ungodly
 - c. God will preserve in Jesus Christ all who remain faithful to Him
 - 1) God will keep them from stumbling
 - 2) God will present them faultless before His presence with exceeding joy
3. And to Him **will** be...
 - a. Glory and majesty
 - b. Dominion and power...both now and forever!

But brethren, for us to enjoy the blessedness promised the faithful, we must heed Jude’s call...

- To remember the words spoken before
- To build ourselves up on our most holy faith
- To pray in the Holy Spirit
- To keep ourselves in the love of God

- **To look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus unto eternal life**
- **To extend compassionate effort to those in danger**

...for only then will it be true that we heeded the exhortation *“to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints”!*