

# **Lesson 3**

*Jude 17-25*

## IV. Exhortations to the Beloved Jude 17-23

Up to this point, Jude has clearly established the absolute necessity for his readers to “*contend for the faith*” [v. 3]:

- a. With reminders of God’s righteous condemnation of the ungodly [vv. 5-7]
- b. With a vivid depiction of the ungodly men who had secretly slipped in [vv. 8-16]

Now Jude provides a series of exhortations designed to make sure that they stand strong in the faith that was “*once for all entrusted to the saints*” [v. 3].

Twice in these verses, Jude addresses his readers as “*dear friends*” [17, 20]

- a. The term “*dear friends*” which is also translated as “beloved” [NASB] is used frequently in the Scriptures [1 Cor 10:14; 1Pet 2:11; 1 John 4:7]
- b. It describes those so addressed as being very dear to the heart of the one using it

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 “*loved by God*” [Rom 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 [17-19]

#### A. REMEMBER WHO SPOKE THEM [17]

<sup>17</sup> *But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold.*

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

**John 13:20** “*I tell you the truth, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me.*”

#### B. REMEMBER WHAT THEY SAID [18-19]

<sup>18</sup> *They said to you, “In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires.”* <sup>19</sup> *These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit.*

1. That there would be scoffers in the last time

**2 Peter 3:2-3** “<sup>2</sup> *I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior **through your apostles.*** <sup>3</sup> *First of all, you must understand that in the **last days scoffers will come**, scoffing and following their own evil desires.”*

2. That they would walk according to their own ungodly lusts

**2 Timothy 3:1-5** “<sup>1</sup> But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. <sup>2</sup> People will be **lovers of themselves**, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, <sup>4</sup> treacherous, rash, conceited, **lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God**— <sup>5</sup> **having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.**”

3. That they are divisive individuals that follow their natural desires

**Acts 20:28-31** “<sup>28</sup> Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. <sup>29</sup> I know that after I leave, **savage wolves** will come in among you and will not spare the flock. <sup>30</sup> Even from your own number men will arise and **distort the truth** in order to **draw away disciples after them**. <sup>31</sup> So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.”

4. That these individuals do not have the Holy Spirit – i.e., they are not truly Christians

**Romans 8:9** “...if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he **does not** belong to Christ.”

[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]**

<sup>20</sup> *But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith*

### **A. TO “BUILD” 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:

**2 Peter 3:18** “**grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**”

3. We therefore need to take advantage of opportunities to study and learn

### **B. TO BUILD “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 ENTRUSTED...”**

1. It is that body of doctrine, which has been revealed “*once for all*” [Jude 3]
2. It is that body of doctrine in which our personal faith is to rest

**Acts 2:42** “*They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*”

**John 17:17** “*Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.*”

**Acts 20:32** “*Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*”

[But Bible study alone will not suffice; there is also the need to...]

### III. PRAY IN THE HOLY SPIRIT [20]

*pray in the Holy Spirit.*

#### 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  
**Philippians 4:6-7** *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the **peace of God**, which transcends all understanding, **will guard** your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*
3. Think of prayer and the Word of God as the “two legs” upon which our spiritual well-being stands; both are needed 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 also uses the same expression  
**Ephesians 6:18** *“pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests”*
2. But Paul does use the expression “*live by the Spirit*” [Gal 5:25], which suggests walking or living according to the Spirit’s direction as found in the Word of God
3. “Praying in the Spirit” simply emphasizes that our **prayers be in harmony with what the Spirit teaches in the Word of God**, which is similar to what John wrote  
**1 John 5:14** *“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”*

[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]

<sup>21</sup> *Keep yourselves in God’s love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.*

#### 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 “*kept*” in Jude 1
3. As Peter wrote, we are those “*who through faith are **shielded by God’s power***” [1 Pet 1:5]
4. So while we are indeed “preserved by God and Christ,” we are also responsible for persevering in our commitment to Christ. Thus:
  - a. The power of God is the divine contribution to keeping us safe
  - b. Remaining faithful is the human responsibility 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. It is how we will be loved by our Father and the Son

**John 14:21** “Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be **loved by my Father**, and **I too will love him** and show myself to him.”

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

**Matthew 28:18-20** “...Jesus came to them and said, “...go and make disciples...baptizing them...and teaching them to **obey everything** I have commanded you...””

- b. Keeping the commandments of God is what really matters, as far as Paul is concerned

**1 Corinthians 7:19** “Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. **Keeping God's commands is what counts.**”

3. It is also the ultimate proof that we love God and His children

**1 John 5:2-3** “<sup>2</sup> This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. <sup>3</sup> **This is love for God: to obey his commands.** And his commands are not burdensome”

[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]

*...as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.*

### A. WE MUST ALWAYS BE LOOKING FORWARD...

1. Looking forward to “*the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ*” [Tit 2:13]
2. Looking forward to the “*day of God*” [2 Pet 3:12]
3. Looking forward to “*a new heaven and a new earth the home of righteousness*” [2 Pet 3:13]

### 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

**Romans 6:23** “For the wages of sin is death, but the **gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**”

2. We are saved, not by works of righteousness, but according to mercy, that we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal

**Titus 3:5** “*he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy*”

3. Thus, the prayer that Paul had for Onesiphorus should be the prayer that we all have for ourselves:

**2 Timothy 1:18** “*May the Lord grant that he will **find mercy** from the Lord on that day!*”

[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]**

<sup>22</sup> *Be merciful to those who doubt; <sup>23</sup> snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.*”

### **A. THE NEED FOR COMPASSION...**

1. First, to save ourselves, for mercy will only be shown to the merciful

**James 2:13** “*...judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful...*”

2. But also to save those who are in danger

- a. Compassion is needed to move us to action

**Matthew 9:36-38** “<sup>36</sup> *When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. <sup>38</sup> Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”*”

- b. Compassion is needed to properly handle those in danger

**Galatians 6:1** “*Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently...*”

**2 Timothy 2:24-26** “<sup>24</sup> *And the Lord’s servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. <sup>25</sup> Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, <sup>26</sup> and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.*”

### **B. THE NEED FOR FEAR...**

1. Lest we be caught up in the same error of the wicked

**Galatians 6:1** “*Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.*”

2. That we might be motivated to persuade those in danger of being lost

**2 Corinthians 5:11** “*Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men.*”

Here then are Jude's final **"Exhortations To The Beloved"**...

- a. Remember the words spoken before [17-19]
- b. Build yourselves up in the most holy faith [20]
- c. Pray in the Holy 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]

These exhortations might easily be called:

- a. "How To Keep From Falling"
- b. "How To Contend For The Faith"  
-- For that is what Jude is seeking to do in writing these words of exhortation

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!

## V. Jude's Closing Doxology Jude 24-25

In the course of his short epistle, Jude has had to write some necessary, and to some degree, unpleasant things, which might lead one in a depressed state of mind, yet we find that Jude is moved to end his epistle with a “doxology”...

1. The word means “**An expression of praise to God**”

2. Doxologies are common in Scripture

a. Usually at the end of an epistle

**Romans 16:25-27** <sup>“25</sup> *Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, <sup>26</sup> but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him— <sup>27</sup> to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.*

b. Sometimes in the middle of one

**Ephesians 3:20-21** <sup>“20</sup> *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, <sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”*

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]

<sup>24</sup> *To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—* <sup>25</sup> *to the only God our Savior....through Jesus Christ our Lord,*

### A. “TO HIM WHO IS ABLE...”

#### 1. “to keep you from falling”

- a. That God is in view is evident from verse 25
- b. But the emphasis appears to be on God’s ability to keep us from “falling”
  - i. “falling” does not refer to the occasional sin
  - ii. But to stumble so as to fall away completely

**2 Peter 1:10** *“Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall”*
- 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 falling was implied at the very beginning of this epistle [v. 1- “kept by Jesus Christ”]
- e. But as we have seen so far, our faith must work with God’s power if we are to keep from “falling”
- f. If we continue in faith, heeding the exhortations given in the word of God, we know that we are truly children of God and that God is keeping us from falling!
- g. God’s ability is stressed by Paul in his “doxology” [Eph 3:20-21]

#### 2. “to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great 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...
  - i. “without fault”

Paul expressed the same thought in Ephesians 5:27 “without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.” This is necessary if we are to be permitted in the presence of God’s glory
  - ii. “with great joy”

Without a doubt this will be the condition of those so blessed! 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

**Romans 8:28-30** <sup>28</sup> *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.* <sup>29</sup> *For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might*

*be the firstborn among many brothers.* <sup>30</sup> *And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, **he also glorified.***

## **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 falling and present us without fault is truly our Savior! In other words, God by nature, is a saving God.

**Isaiah 45:22** “*Turn to me and **be saved**, all you ends of the earth; for **I am God**, and there is no other.*”

**1 Timothy 4:10** “...*God, who is **the Savior of all men**, and especially of those who believe.*”

### 2. “*through Jesus Christ our Lord*”

- a. God’s Salvation is only through Christ...why?
- b. Because only through Christ, God accomplished the saving work

**1 John 4:14** “*And we have seen and testify that the **Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.***”

## **II. THE PRAISE ASCRIBED TO GOD [25b]**

*be glory, majesty, power and authority...before all ages, now and forevermore!*

### **A. “GLORY AND MAJESTY”...**

1. “*glory*” comes from “doxa” and is used to suggest dignity and honor
2. “*majesty*” comes from “megalosune” 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. “POWER AND AUTHORITY”...**

1. “*power*” is from “kratos” and means “might, power, strength”
2. “*authority*” is from “exousia” 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. “NOW AND FOREVER”...

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

With a single word [“**amen,**” i.e., “so be it”], Jude ends his doxology and the epistle itself. And so it will be...

- a. Despite the efforts of any to turn the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny the lordship of Christ
- b. God will bring into judgment all who are ungodly
- c. God will preserve by Jesus Christ all who remain faithful to Him
  - i. God will keep them from falling
  - ii. God will present them without fault before his presence with great joy

And to God will be...

- a. Glory and Majesty
- b. Power and Authority

...before all ages, now and forevermore!