

# ASSURANCE FOR DAILY LIVING Sunday School- April 10, 2011

## Unifying Topic: PRAISE BUILDS US UP

### Lesson Text

I. Remember The Apostles' Teaching (Jude 17-19)

II. Build Yourselves Up (Jude 20-23)

III. Our Eternal Assurance (Jude 24-25)

**The Main Thought:** Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. (Jude 24-25 KJV).

**Unifying Principle:** People need frequent assurance for daily living. Where can we find words of assurance to sustain us? Jude's benediction expresses complete confidence in God's ability to sustain us.

**Lesson Aim:** To help students know they are secure in God through Jesus Christ.

**Life Aim:** To help students protect themselves from false teachers by remembering the Apostles' teaching, to strengthen themselves in the faith with the Holy Spirit and God's love, and to know that God assures their eternal security.

17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

18 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

22 And of some have compassion, making a difference:

23 And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

### **HISTORY:**

Jude, as stated in the salutation (V1) was the servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James. He was also brother of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>1</sup>As a result of the persecution of the early church, Jude was originally going to write a letter about Salvation, however, because there were false teachers that were threatening the unity of the church, he felt that it was necessary to write and exhort them to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints (V3). The faith is "*The body of revealed truth as it pertains to God, sin, humanity, Christ, and eternal things*" (Swindoll 1387). It was an urgent need to defend the faith; for certain men crept in unaware turning the grace of God into lasciviousness (exciting lewd emotions, shameless immorality). That means that they have denied the fundamental Christian doctrines. One important point to consider is that these apostates were not backslidden; they were never regenerated. Therefore, these people treated the grace of God as a license to do whatsoever pleased them.

This epistle is a call to the church to resist these deceivers and to stand for the faith. It is also a stern warning of God's judgment toward the apostates (vv.5-7). These false teachers were also blasphemers (vv.8-10). They refused to submit to all authority (divine, apostolic or otherwise) that is above them. In order to understand the seriousness of their blasphemy, Jude recounts the dispute between Satan and Michael the Archangel over the body of Moses (v. 9). The final reason to avoid these apostates is because their spirituality is empty and their ways are ungodly (vv.11-16). These apostates are spiritually bankrupt.

### **LESSON:**

## **Jude 17-19 Remembering The Apostles' Teaching**

### **Strong Advice By The Apostles**

V17 Jude has just covered the terrible danger that was facing believers, the horrifying danger of false teachers. And they are within the church. This makes the danger even more terrible, for it means that there are people within the church who do not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who came to earth to save man; and that Jesus Christ is the sinless Son of God. Therefore, Jude turns his thoughts to his believing readers. He calls them **beloved**; special friends to whom one shows love and affection for. The word "**but**", signals a pleasant change of tone; "*but*", we are to be different—contrasts Christians with apostates. What can we do about the false teaching? Jude proposes a solution to the problem of apostates: This is the first exhortation of this passage: **Remember the words spoken by the**

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.koinonia-fellowship.org/Introduction\\_to\\_Jude.htm](http://www.koinonia-fellowship.org/Introduction_to_Jude.htm)

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitem-sundayschool.html>.

**apostles.** What are they or even we to remember, because sometimes we forget our goal; our purpose; our duty? It was the apostle's doctrine that was recognized as the teaching that came from the Lord. The false teachers attempted to place themselves on the same level as the apostles. The message of the apostles was not a message of their own, but of that which came from the Lord Himself. The whole purpose of the letter is to remind them that the Word of God was given once and for all by the apostles.

**V18 Jude says, There will be mockers** The apostles warned Jude's readers that some would "mock" Christianity. Second Peter 3:3 quotes the word as "scoffers." A "mock" is a deceiver, imposter, scornor; they mimic others. They love to mock those who want to please God. Jude wants Christians to expect this kind of mocking, so they won't be surprised by it. ...**in the last days:** The "last days" refers to the end of the church age and the Tribulation.

...**who walk after their own ungodly lusts:** That is, <sup>2</sup>when sin and lust is their constant practice. But what is it to walk in sin? - To make lust our principle, our course, our end. Our principle: Whatever a wicked man goeth about, he doth it out of some carnal impulse. His good duties are either to hide a lust or feed a lust. If he abstains from one sin, it is to feed another. Again, to walk in sin is when it is our way and course because they are carnal men and will follow earthly things with greater earnestness and delight. Their end is to please themselves and to satisfy their lusts.

**V19 These are they who separate themselves; divide** Christians in a church. How?

1. They are agitators in Churches, creating factions and divisions. There are three ways they cause division:
  1. They present a divided Christianity to the world.
  2. They cause hurt and pain in the hearts of true believers because their Lord and His church are being shamed.
  3. They usually cause feelings of neglect and division when they show partiality and favoritism.

They have forsaken the cross, purposely choosing another way, **sensual**, How?

2. They are sensual, meaning—subject to appetites and passions of the flesh; following their natural instincts coming from the soul. They center their life around themselves. They are worldly minded in two senses:
  1. They believe that man is to work his way into God's acceptance—be good and do good.
  2. They believe that man is saved and becomes acceptable to God by keeping the rituals and rules of the church, and by attending services when possible.

<sup>3</sup>There are those who traffic in religion today. These people no longer believe in the deity of Christ, His virgin birth, or substitutionary sacrifice for sins. These people allow their souls to dominate their beliefs. They do not accept the Word of God by faith. They operate on pure human viewpoint rather than divine viewpoint.

...**And having not the Spirit.** Why not?

3. They are **void of the Holy Spirit.** No matter what they think or say, the spirit they have is not the Spirit of God. The true Spirit of God confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, that the incarnation is true. The Spirit of God cannot confess anything else because the Spirit of God Himself dwells within him. Paul made it clear that if any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

This passage teaches that these mockers/false teachers are lost because they are separated from God and have not clearly remembered the words of the apostles.

## **Jude 20-23 Build Yourself Up**

### **V20-21 Strong Advice By Counsel**

**V20** Jude wants to make sure they know that they are (much-loved) "beloved" He reminds them again. This is the third time Jude uses the term "beloved" (vv. 3, 17, 20). The second exhortation is to **build up yourselves on your most holy faith**. To be "built up" means to finish the structure of which the foundation has already been laid, to give constant increase in Christian knowledge, and in a life conformed thereto. There are four ways that a believer builds himself up:

1. He builds upon the foundation of holy faith. "Holy" means separate; set apart; different. "Faith" is our beliefs, the truths learned from Scripture. It is faith that is not based upon opinion, speculation, and imaginations of men. It is faith that has been separated and set apart from man's ideas about God and life. The "most holy faith" is the Word of God. The point is this: believers are to build up their lives upon their studying the Word of God, meditating on it, learning, memorizing, and living out the Scriptures. What they have learned, they are to continue to build more and more, and apply it to their daily life. The things they can't see, they already know because it is their foundation they adhere to in the Word of God. If we shut the Bible, we shut the mouth of God. Studying the Word of God is not optional.
2. He builds by praying in the Spirit. Prayer is another essential weapon in spiritual life. This is always by the leading of the Holy Spirit. This is not mechanical prayer but prayer where you allow him to give direction of

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.newblehome.co.uk/manton/vol05/jude-18.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://versebyversecommentary.com/2008/03/17/jude-18-19/>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitem-sundayschool.html>.

what to pray for when you don't know what or how to pray. We must be in continued communication with God as to get orders and directions from Him. To pray in the Spirit means...

- a. That we pray under His guidance and influence, under His control and power.
- b. That we seek and ask His help as we approach the throne of grace.
- c. That we focus our minds and concentrate upon the Holy Spirit's leading.
- d. That we ask and depend upon the Holy Spirit to cleanse our requests and make sure that what we ask is according to the will of God.
- e. That we walk in the Spirit day by day and offer unbroken prayer to God all day long.
- f. That we set time aside every day and wrestle in prayer before God for the needs of loved ones and for the needs of God's people and for the world—all in the Spirit.
- g. That lastly or first, that our hearts have been cleansed of all unforgiveness by God's Spirit.

These mockers/false teachers prayed, but without power nor in communication with God through the Holy Spirit—since they knew Him not. The believer was not only able, but is urged to rely on the power of the Spirit of God in every area of life, including prayer.

3. **V21 Keep yourselves:** The word "*keep*" means to attend to carefully, take care of, guard. The believer builds up by keeping himself in the love of God. Jude says keep yourself; stay within the circle of God's love or keep yourself in the place or realm that God resides. To live within the boundaries of God's love means to live close to Him and His people, not listening to mockers/false teachers who would pull you away from Him (1Jh.15:9,10). We keep ourselves in God's love by (1) building ourselves on the Word of God and (2) praying in the Holy Spirit. Keeping ourselves in the love of God is keeping ourselves in the will of God.
4. **(V21b)** Lastly, we build ourselves up when we keep looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ by focusing on eternal life:<sup>4</sup> "*Mercy*" is pity, compassion, kindness, goodness. This is God's mercy toward us. The word "*looking*" carries the ideas of expecting, waiting for, earnestly expecting. It conveys the ideas of receiving to one's self, admitting, giving access to. Why are we looking for mercy? *Lam 3:22-23* says, "*Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.*" by looking for that glorious day of His return—**eternal life (V21c)**, when God's mercy will be fully known. It will only take place when Christ returns. By keeping that focus of his return, then we are in the will of God, making us also in the love of God! It is at His return that we will be transformed into His image of perfection and glory. Therefore, build by keeping your eyes upon the mercy of our Jesus Christ and the glorious day of His return.

**The third exhortation:** be compassionate and reclaim people (V22-23).

**V22 And of some have compassion, making a difference:** Jude begins to tell us what we must do with those who have been influenced by these certain men. We know we need to firmly contend for in the faith—dealing with those who dispute and argue against you, because they struggle in their hardness and toughness. We need to make a distinction, based on where they are coming from. We are to separate those from the snare of the false teachers' doctrine. Those are the ones who may be doubters of the truth, but have not shut their minds all the way to truth. These are the exceptional cases of men and women who are caught up in error. There are three tactics in dealing with error:

1. Show mercy.
2. Use boldness.
3. Use caution in showing mercy. And therefore, we need to show pity; mercy when contending with them in the faith. That's the some we have to have compassion with. The persons whom we should treat with much compassion are:
  - a. The ignorant and seduced; simple and weak hearted.
  - b. The afflicted in conscience.
  - c. Those doubting the faith—carnal believers.
  - d. Those attracted to the charisma, appearance, and beliefs—preaching and teaching style.
  - e. Those that are young and immature.

We are to assist the weaker members to clear their minds from wrong thoughts; making a difference without judging.

**V23 And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.**

Others need a direct approach—those who are at the very brink of hell (judgment) itself. They need to be snatched. Their sins are so deeply rooted that they needed to be approached with the greatest fear lest we would be defiled with them. Spiritual discernment is necessary in dealing with the victims rooted in sin. Loyal believers need great care not to find their own faith in danger. It is like someone who catches a patient's disease. They were trying to help the sick one back to health and were exposed to that very sickness. Therefore, the proper attitude of hating their sinfulness is the only attitude that will keep us clean. We are to hate the sin not the person.

<sup>4</sup> <http://versebyversecommentary.com/2008/03/17/jude-21b/>  
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitem-sundayschool.html>.

## Jude 24-25 Our Eternal Assurance

[The fourth exhortation](#) is to walk in the keeping power of God (V24-25).

**V24 Now unto him**—God alone, we look to! This is the conclusion of Jude's short letter. Note that this is a benediction upon believers. What is the source of the believer's security? Who is it that keeps the believer secure while he walks upon the earth? It is God—God's keeping power.

1. God is **able to keep us from falling** (V24).
2. God is able to **make us blameless** when we come face to face with Him (V24).
3. God is able to infuse us **with triumphant joy** in the glorious day that we meet Him face to face (V24).
4. God is **the only wise God and He is our Savior** (V25).
5. God alone is the God who dwells in **glory, majesty, dominion and power** (V25).

In closing Jude gives one of the most balanced and beautiful benedictions in the New Testament. It is a prayer fitting for his readers who are threatened both with falling and with fault because of the false teachers who are trying to lure them into sin with claims of false revelation. "*He who began a good work within you will complete or perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus*" *Phil. 1:6*. It is God and God alone who is able to keep us from stumbling and to stand firm in this life, and then to make us stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy. When we recall the Word of God we are kept from falling. God's mercy and power are able to keep us safe and to fill us with triumphant joy on judgment day.

**V25** Jude calls God **the only all wise God**, for He is the only living and true God—the only God who could ever plan and create the world and man; the only God who could bring about the salvation of man after man had made such a mess of things. God is not only wise, **He is Savior**. He alone has the wisdom and power to save man from this corruptible world of sin and evil, disease and accident, death and judgment.

Jude praises God's work for believers by ascribing to Him **glory** (*splendor*), **majesty** (*greatness*), **power** (*might*), and **dominion** (*authority*) **both now and ever. Amen** (*that settles it*)! The only thing left for believers to do is to shout the praises of Him who alone can save them.

### SUMMARY:

As previously mentioned, these false teachers had penetrated the local churches like a computer virus penetrates the hard drive on a computer. As the virus begins to corrupt the data on the storage disk, their teaching of lawlessness (In other words, you can go to heaven while sinning), and the denial of the incarnation (manifestation of God in flesh) were eroding the core of fundamental Christian doctrine. This of course had a devastating effect on the Christians. As a result of the erroneous teaching, some believers doubted the truth of God (v.22) and others turned from the fundamental truths to follow these teachers (v.23). The author is calling on the believers to remember that they were forewarned about these false teachers. Believers are always to *be sober and vigilant* (1 Pet 5:8). By continually watching for apostates, the Christian are not caught by surprise by their false teaching.

How do believers attend to the spiritually wounded? In **verses 20-23** Jude gives the church practical steps in helping those who have been deceived. But what about those believers that have fallen prey to false teachers? The most important thing we can do is build ourselves up "*in the most holy faith*" (v.20) and pray in the Spirit. When Christians pray to the Father and abide in the Word of God (v.17), they are able to keep themselves in God's love (v.21). The ones who have to be dealt with directly and vigorously, we are to save them by pulling them out of the fire "*with fear*" (v.23). The entire point of restoration is to bring wayward disciples back into fellowship with God.

While the problem is serious, Jude reminds Christians that it is God who "is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (v.24). Since the victory is ours we should praise God and echo Jude's closing: "*to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen*" (v.25).

As we apply this lesson to our daily lives, the first thing to do is remember the teaching of the Word of God. Remember what was taught and keep remembering that it sticks. When you remember you can begin to build yourself up on your most holy faith; your doctrine of beliefs from the scriptures. Then you can be secure in your eternal position. That will cause praise from our lips that comes from our hearts. To know that the only wise God keeps us, presents us faultless, and gives us exceeding joy in His presence makes Him Lord and Savior forever!

### APPLICATION:

The Word of God prepares us for eternal security. Apply it to the mind and heart! So glad that when we find ourselves in error, we can repent and come back to God's mercy.