

Let's remember some points in our previous sermons:

- Called and loved and kept (vs. 1)
- Contend for the faith (vs. 3)
- Be aware and alert of certain persons creeping in (vs. 4)
- Be reminded of past apostates and their end (vs. 5-16)

After a lengthy description of historical apostates and warning against current ones, Jude addresses his readers once again with these important truths, beloved and remember, vs. 17, and as he started his letter, that he desired to remind them, vs. 5. We might ask ourselves a great question here. **Why is the Bible so trustworthy in every situation in our earthly life? And why is it still viable in today's culture and world?**

The Scriptures warn us of false teachers. They warn us of men who seek for themselves glory and honor. They warn us of men who will turn the grace of God into moral decrepit acts of lusts. And yet today this same warning is necessary, because many in the church today are unaware of the tactics and cleverness of apostates and bad doctrine has crept in. Why is so vital for us today to remember what the Scripture teaches?

**The Bible Is Inspired** - 2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness." This word inspired means "to be breathed out." It literally means "the breath of God." In this verse, Paul tells us what the Bible is. He tells us about the nature of Scripture and theologians call this truth the plenary verbal inspiration of Scripture. And plenary **means all of it. Every single word.**

Because the Bible is inspired it shows us the way to holiness and righteousness. Literally, the Bible gives you all you need for life and godliness. **What is the Scripture profitable for?** Teaching, reproof, correction and training. In secular psychology they apply what's called cognitive behavioral therapy. It is described as this, "We're going to change your way of thinking from this to something that's more acceptable or something more desirable for you, whatever you want, without Christ."<sup>1</sup> In opposition to that the Bible teaches real change, Ephesians 4:22-24, "In reference to your **former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.**"

**The Bible is inerrant.** That word inerrant literally means "without error." Scripture, in its original manuscript and properly understood, does not affirm anything that would contradict the truth. Proverbs 30:5-6, "Every word of God is tested; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. Do not add to His words, or He will reprove you, and you will be proved a liar."

This is why we must be reminded and remember the words of Scripture. Lest we let allow weak doctrine and altered truth to inhibit our lives. This is a reminder of who we are in Christ to know and recognize false teaching and false doctrine.

**But you,** again, **vs. 17-23,** gives us the means of how we live as followers of Christ in this world.

1. He reminds them to remain in a strong spiritual condition. Building up yourselves on your most holy faith, the Christian faith. We build ourselves upon the Word of God. We find our greatest hope and joy and peace in the words of Scripture to encounter false teaching and weak doctrine, and affirm our feet upon the solid rock of Christ our foundation. It is the word of God that will give you a firm footing in the midst of an evil and perverse generation.

2. Praying in the Holy Spirit does not mean a charismatic type event or some extra biblical account. It seems to literally mean to pray according to God's will. Have peace about what to do or go or say in the spirit directed life.
3. Keep yourselves in the love of God. One commentator says the love of God is like sunshine, it's always there, but clouds get in the way at times. The analogy is the love of God is always burning down on us. *"If sin comes between us and the Lord, then we are no longer enjoying His love in practice. We can keep ourselves in His love first of all by lives of holiness and godliness. And if sin should come between, then we should confess and forsake that sin immediately."*<sup>2</sup> As Charles A. Tindley says, *"Nothing between my soul and the Savior, naught of this world's delusive dream; nothing preventing the least of His favor, keep the way clear, let nothing between."* We should desire this in our life.
4. We should be waiting for the mercy of the Lord. It seems to refer to His imminent return to take His people home to heaven. In days of darkness and apostasy, we are to keep the light of the blessed hope burning in our hearts. It will prove a comforting and purifying hope. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, *"But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."* What comfort it is to know in an age of apostate religious people and leaders that our hope and mercy is the Lord will return.
5. Have mercy on some. There's a difference between an apostate propagandist and those who are being duped by false teachers and doctrines. John deals with these teachers in 2 John 10-11, *"If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds."* This is for those who are promoting such. For others who are being led astray, we should by the truth of Scripture show them the true way, the error of false doctrine. And we can only do that by the words of Scripture. Thus, having mercy on them for being led astray, and showing them the truth of God.
6. A further plea to warn those is in vs. 23. These we are to save by strong, resolute warning and instruction, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh. This seems to be a reference to a lepers garment, cf. Leviticus 13:47-52. Maybe Jude was referring to the external garments that they wore to entice sin? But the apostates had made sexual sin a form of distorted worship and defilement. And if by the truth of the gospel they could be saved and redeemed by grace they would be snatched from the eternal flames of hell fire judgement.

The benediction Jude closes with is hope filled and joyful. He closes with the address to "Him" referring to God, who is able to keep you. In fact, this statement is an **ascription** which means *"the attribution of something to a cause"*, and is a tribute to God who is able to keep us. Let's unpack this:

1. He is able, and a brief definition of able is *"having the power and means to do something."* Hebrews 7:25, *"Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."*
2. He is able to establish, Romans 16:25, *"Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ."*

3. He is able to help, Hebrews 2:18, "For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted." If you find yourself in a position or place to sin against God, He is able to help.
4. He is able to provide providential peace, Isaiah 26:3-4, "The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, Because he trusts in You. Trust in the Lord forever, for in God the Lord, we have an everlasting Rock."
5. He is able to keep you committed, 1 Timothy 1:12, "For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard (keep) what I have entrusted to Him until that day." Paul's letter to Timothy is one where he is near wanting to quit or not do what God given him to do. He was on the verge of quitting.
6. He is able to do more than we can even comprehend, Ephesians 3:20, "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us."

What is he able to do now in our text in this time in the midst of apostles? He is able to keep them from stumbling. It carries the idea of "*standing firm, exempt from falling.*" He is telling believers in this time of apostasy that God is able to keep you from doubting the truth of Scripture and not stumble in the age of false teachers.

In our culture today, so called evangelicalism is so tainted with bad doctrine, prosperity gospel, weak standards and an adaption to the whims of the culture that it doesn't even resemble a transformed life. Preachers have adapted the gospel to fit their crowd. Churches are acclimating to a weak and self-centered society in order to get them to attend church. Far too many "church members" are allowing little idols in their life to assume the place of the most high.

The promise of not stumbling doesn't stop here, he affirms the keeping of God, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory, blameless with great joy! This is truly stupendous! When we think of what we were, that is, dead through our trespasses and sins; when we think of what we are, that is, poor, weak, failing servants; and then to think that one day we will stand absolutely faultless in the Throne Room of the universe, rejoicing with exceeding joy, that is, what grace is this!

He is not only our keeper but He is our God our Savior. **It's a marvel that God saved me.** Apostates and false teachers may seek to rob Him of glory, detract from His majesty, grumble against His dominion, and challenge His power. But all true believers find their greatest fulfillment in glorifying and enjoying Him both now and forever.

Psalm 16:11, "You will make known to me the path of life; **In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.**" Ecclesiastes 2:25, "For who can eat and who can have enjoyment without Him." What joy and great joy it is to have God open our eyes to see error and weakness and apostasy and give us the means to speak the truth to save others. But to God be glory, majesty and dominion, and authority. He is that now. He is that in the future.

<sup>1</sup> <https://biblicalcounseling.com/resource-library/conference-messages/why-we-counsel-from-the-bible-alone/> (accessed 2.6.25)

<sup>2</sup> Believer's Bible Commentary; Copyright © 1989, 1990, 1992, 1995, 2016 by William MacDonald.