

Keep Yourselves in the Love of God  
A Sermon on Jude 1:17-23

by  
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**1. Introduction**

**2. Jude's First Command (vv. 17-19)**

- a. Jude's initial command is that we remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ
  - i. The idea here is beyond a mere recognition of this as fact.
  - ii. It's a remembrance which spurs our hearts into an affection for that truth – yet also, spurs us into action.
    - 1. The affection we have is due to the fact that God is the Sovereign One over all of this.
    - 2. The action we are spurred on to is to contend for the faith
  - iii. As the body at Missio Dei Fellowship – we need to embrace this and not downplay the seriousness of it.
  - iv. We are given three indicators to look for with the apostates:
    - 1. They are the ones causing divisions.
    - 2. They are worldly-minded (or better put: naturally-minded).
    - 3. They are devoid of the Spirit.
  - v. These three things are just another means to show everything covered in the previous section (vv. 5-16).

**3. Jude's Second Command (vv. 20-21)**

- a. Jude's second command for us is to "keep yourself in the love of God".
  - i. Jude's focus then is not simply to combat the false teacher and apostate; we must pay close attention to our own spiritual well-being.
  - ii. The phrase "keep yourself in the love of God" is incredibly important.
    - 1. It does not mean we can keep ourselves "saved". Recall that Jude is speaking to those whom God has "called" and will "keep".
    - 2. In essence, he is calling us to remain in the place where we can experience the love of God poured out upon us through Christ.
      - a. We do this by resting in the fact that God has accomplished and applied your redemption, and He will, through the work of the Spirit and the Word, sanctify you in all truth.
      - b. The plain way this works itself out in the believer's life is in and through obedience to God's commands.
      - c. Yet it goes beyond the individual; we are corporately called to guard one another in the faith.
  - iii. Jude gives them three participles ("-ing" words) to show specifically how they are to keep themselves in the love of God.
    - 1. You keep yourself in the love of God by building yourselves up on your most holy faith.
      - a. Simply and plainly, you become a person mastered by the Scriptures in every regard.



- a. We are to look with eager anticipation for Christ's return, even though we may not see it in our lifetime. Thus, we wait with hope in His promise of mercy.
- b. It brings home the idea that we persevere until the very end. We keep our eyes upon Christ and do not let this present evil age bog us down.
- c. This all circles back to knowing the Word and applying it. We live with ultimate reference to God, knowing that we shall stand before Him at that Great Day and give an account.

#### **4. Jude's Final Commands (vv. 22-23)**

- a. It is important to know these commands pertain to those who are under the influence of the false teacher – not the false teachers themselves.
- b. It is also incredibly important that we notice that Jude issues these commands after he clearly shows the church how to keep themselves in the love of God.
- c. Jude then gives three commands surrounding the nature of rescue work for those who are equipped to do this work:
  - i. Have mercy on some who are doubting.
    1. We don't have the luxury of chucking the "doubters" off to the side. We are to teach them, knowing that our adversary is like a roaring lion prowling about, seeking whom he may devour.
    2. We are to instruct them with gentleness in the proper way.

- ii. Save others, snatching them out of the fire.
  - 1. These people are beyond “doubting” – they believe the false teachers and are to be rescued from the brink of eternal damnation.
  - 2. It’s a violent word picture because there isn’t a form of gentleness, we are literally to rip them out of hellfire.
- iii. Have mercy on some with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.
  - 1. This is the final, and most dangerous type of person we are commanded to rescue. They are those who are committed to the false teacher.
  - 2. The word picture here with the “garment polluted by the flesh” is quite vivid. It speaks to the undergarment, what we would simply call “underwear”. Picture it like a soiled pair of underwear; their wickedness and perversion are so great that it seeps out of them.
  - 3. And yet we must have sober-minded fear when approaching them, lest we become defiled by their vileness. It is better for them to be condemned, than for you to be brought down with them.
- iv. If we are able to rescue any of these people, the job is not yet done.
  - 1. We are to instruct them in our most holy faith so they too can be built up and persevere, rather than fall away.

2. Most plainly stated: teach them to know the Scriptures and to apply them to the whole of their lives.

## 5. Conclusion

### Small Group Questions

1. What are the three main things Jude wants us to focus on so that we can contend for the faith?
2. Be painfully honest with your group here – have you been cultivating the basic, Christian disciplines Jude gives us:
  - a. Studying the Word
  - b. Obeying the Word
  - c. Mutually building up of the body
  - d. Praying in line with God's will
  - e. Living with reference to Christ's return
3. Are you at the point in your walk where you could obey the commands found in vv. 22-23?
4. If you're not, what tangible steps can you be taking so you become mature enough to do this "rescue work"?