

## **Jude 1:20-23 – March 10, 2024**

### **Links**

- [How “NOT” To Pray, Matthew 6:5-8 - Prayer Meeting – Tuesday, March 5th, 2024](#)
- [Jesus Loves Lahaina Maui, Part 2 video](#)

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DAVID: We just lift this time up to You, Lord. We give You all the praise and glory, Lord. Thank You for Your blessings, Lord. And may You continue to give us Your word, Lord. Keep our hearts and minds focused on You, Lord, as Pastor JD gives Your word. We lift this time up to You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen. Amen. Good morning. Welcome. You can be seated. How you doing?

[ Congregation says, "Great!" ]

Okay, I'll take it.

[ Laughter ]

That was not bad. Those of you online that are joining us we're wanting to welcome you as well. So glad you are. I have three things that I want to mention before we get started, the first of which is that we'll have the link to last Tuesday night's prayer meeting teaching on our website. And the reason is because in it I shared the praise report about my wife, who as many of you know, is battling breast cancer. But God, as only He can, seems to be shrinking the tumor and stopping the spread.

[ Applause ]

Praise the Lord! And please continue to pray because that's the only thing we can attribute this to, in a word, prayer. And thank you all so very much for doing so. So don't stop, please. As they say, we're not out of the proverbial woods yet. So we're really trusting God. "But God" and praise God.

So secondly, we'll also have the link to Thursday night's part 2 of '*Jesus Loves Lahaina*,' with Pastor Steve Santos and myself. I really encourage you to, whether you're local or virtual, and especially those of you who did not attend, I really encourage you to watch this because Pastor Steve shared powerfully and even prophetically many things to consider prayerfully.

Lastly, this is for mainly those of you online. We received a number of reports that some Apple users with older devices were unable to access and view last week's Update, as well as some other videos on our website. Please know that our team is working tirelessly to resolve this as soon as possible. However, we would really covet your prayers because this may be more spiritual than technical, especially given the content of last week's Update,

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which was specific to the deception of Christian nationalism and false teachings of New Apostolic Reformation theology. So you might say that the enemy doesn't want that out there for that reason. So please pray.

It may not be so much a technical issue. We are working on the technical side of it, but we could really use your help on the spiritual side of it. Would you please pray? Because we're wrestling with some very powerful entities in the spiritual realm, wickedness in high places.

In the meantime, again, for those of you online, you can go to the Support Center — General Information and Announcements page for our Updates on this. We'll try to keep this updated. Also, there's a list of other viewing options, all of which are fully functional and operational.

And lastly, we, again, very much appreciate your patience with us, but more importantly your prayers for us. All right. Let's get into the Word. Jude *verses 20-23*. I didn't say *Chapter 1* because there's only one chapter. But I like to put the one there because it just kind of bugs me. You know, some people are like that. I won't look at anybody. But you know if it just said Jude 20-23, I'd be like, wait, what chapter?

[ Laughter ]

No, that's a thing for some of us, okay? Some of you too. You know who you are. I won't ask for a show of hands. So I'm going to put the 1 there. So *Chapter 1:20-23*.

Now, here's the thing, Lord willing, and if we're still here, we will finish the Book, short book, of Jude next week, next Sunday, right? This Thursday, Lord willing, and if we're still here, we will finish the *Book of Ezekiel*. You know where I'm going with this? Should I just go there and get there? All right, let's do this.

So if we do that, we will start at the same time on Thursday night, the *Book of Daniel* and on Sunday morning, the *Book of Revelation*. But the Rapture's going to happen before, so...

Now, lest you think that I'm so clever as to time it that way, give me a break. I'm not. But the Lord is. I just think God's got such a great sense of humor. I did ask Him about. I said, okay, so wait — I didn't plan it. Again, I'm not that clever or smart.

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But I did pray. I said, Lord, wouldn't it be cool if we could start the *Book of Daniel* and *Revelation*? And I did not pray, by the way, Lord, don't come back until we do the *Book of Daniel* because that's going to take us all a long time. And I don't want the Lord to wait that long to come back.

So... but, as it turned out, last week, last Thursday, we had Pastor Steve Santos here and it perfectly timed the last two chapters this Thursday, Ezekiel 47 and 48. And then next week, the last — I have to do the math — I think it's two or three verses in Jude. And then the following Thursday and the following Sunday we are going to embark on an amazing study, verse-by-verse, through the Books of Daniel and Revelation.

One last thing. How cool is that, right? So I'm almost done with just the introduction. We haven't even got into text. But the *Book of Daniel* has been referred to affectionately as the Old Testament *Book of Revelation*. We got bookends, and only God could have timed it like that. I am so excited, and I can't wait, and I'm looking forward to it. And boy, are we in for a treat.

Okay. Now, back to our Bible study already in progress. Beginning in *verse 20*. Can I invite you to stand if you're able? If not, where you're seated is fine. You can follow along as I read.

Jude, interesting, is now going to turn yet another corner. He just got done, pretty graphic, painting this picture. It's a horrible picture of what these people look like, what they're going to be like. What people? These people that slip in, creep in unaware into a church and wreak havoc, getting people to deny our one and only Lord and sovereign, Jesus Christ.

And they're so dangerous, these people. And in fact, when Jude started the letter, he started off wanting to write about our common salvation that we share, which would have been just — what an amazing letter that would be. We could just rejoice in the salvation that we all share in common.

And then God just redirects him mid-stream, says, No, Jude. This rises to the level of importance that you need to write this letter, not about our common salvation, but as a warning about these kinds of people.

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So now he's going to shift the focus from what they're like to what we need to be like because of what they're like. And so that's where we pick it up in *verse 20*.

**“But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait [*Watch this*] for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. Be merciful [*Verse 22*] to those who doubt; snatch others [*Verse 23*] from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.”**

Let's just close in prayer. I think this is self-explanatory. No? Let's pray, then.

Father, wow! Thank You for inspiring Jude to write this. It's evident, even at first read, that there's something here that we need to take heed to. So in order to do that, we need the Holy Spirit to be our teacher and our guide as we navigate through these verses that are here before us in Your word.

Lord, clearly this is a warning for us today, especially in our day in this world in which we are living in these last days. So Lord, we're asking You, posturing ourselves before You, Lord, would You, by the Holy Spirit, just get our attention and then hold our attention so our minds don't wander. Because that's exactly what the enemy wants, especially with this, this passage.

So please, Lord, just keep all the competing, clamoring distractions away so that we can give You our undivided attention as You speak into our lives that which it is that You have for us here in Your word today. And, Lord, when You do, we want to receive it. We want to have ears to hear, certainly, but more importantly, we want to have hearts to receive that we would be numbered amongst those of whom it is said, they're not merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word.

So Lord, will You do that for us? Will You speak? Speak, Lord. Your servants are listening. We pray In Jesus' name. Amen and amen. You can be seated. Thank you. Okay. Quite a text before us today. Would you agree?

So Jude, by the Holy Spirit, is exhorting us, warning us, certainly, but also encouraging us as we wait for the pre-tribulation rapture.

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Oh, come on, JD. You see the pre-tribulation rapture in every verse of every chapter in every book in the entire Bible.

I know. What? So I know what you're thinking because I can read your mind. Wait. There's something coming in here. Wow! Never mind. (Chuckle) I know what you're thinking.

Come on. How do you get the pre-trib rapture out of this passage? I mean, how do you insert the pre-trib rapture into this text? Isn't — aren't you not supposed to do that? Do you have a word for that?

They certainly do. But before you falsely accuse me of such, may I kindly and humbly ask that you listen to *verse 21* again? Let me just read it again. I want you to listen to this. Jude, by the Holy Spirit, writes, “**...as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, [Watch] to bring you to eternal life.**”

That's the Rapture! I'm sorry if I'm yelling at you, but that's the Rapture. And that's my story, and I'm sticking with it. The Rapture is in the text, and I'm not inserting it. It's already there. How do I get there? Notice, “**...bring you to.**”

Bring us to where?

Oh! That place that Jesus said He goes to prepare for us in His Father's house where there are many mansions. And if it were not so, He would not have told us that He goes to prepare this place for us, that where He is, there we will be also.

Why?

Because He's going to bring us there. We just have to wait. We eagerly await. That's the Rapture we're waiting for. And I like this, by the way. Don't miss this: The mercy. This is the mercy of God. And not a moment too soon. This is merciful from a merciful God who is going to take us out of this Christ-rejecting world and take us to that place that He's prepared for us in His Father's house.

It's a bridal chamber where in Jewish wedding customs, they would celebrate and consummate their marriage for a period of — I've got to watch out when I put fingers up. I've got to be careful. People are like, he's making the sign of the devil. No, I'm not.

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I've got seven (Showing one hand with five fingers and one hand with two fingers). There's nothing wrong with that. And two (Showing other hand with two fingers). That's seven, a period of seven, the number of completion.

So while we're celebrating and consummating our marriage, the world is tribulating for seven years. And at the end of the seven, the bride and the groom emerge as husband and wife from that bridal chamber, and they have a huge wedding feast, the wedding feast of the Lamb.

That alone, guys. Food in heaven. That's what I'm talking about! The wedding feast is after the seven. Don't mess with the order.

Oh, that's all typology. You know, JD, you put too much emphasis...

Am I having an argument with myself?

[ Laughter ]

Okay, just let me have it.

You put too much emphasis on typology. You make it sound like it's, you know, of paramount importance.

Well, it actually is.

What do you mean?

Well, ask Moses about the importance of typology. You remember the account? So there they are in the wilderness and the exodus. And yet again they're complaining and murmuring against God and against Moses.

Why?

Because there's no water to drink. Were there not enough graves in Egypt? God had to bring us all out here to kill us? Really? We're going to die of thirst. No, you're not. Moses, come here. You see that rock over there? The rock, a type of Christ, the Rock of our salvation. I want you to strike that rock. I'm going to make water come out of that rock. Watch Me now.

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And he did. He took the rod, he struck the rock, a type of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, from whom the water of life flows because of the crucifixion. It was all a type. It was a prophetic Scripture picture pointing to the person of Jesus Christ. And so the water comes from the rock.

Well, fast forward, I don't know how much longer it is. It couldn't have been that much longer. "It's like déjà vu all over again," to quote that great theology, Yogi Berra. That's for the older people. You young people have no clue who that guy is. But— so déjà vu all over again.

We're thirsty. We're there not enough graves in Egypt? I mean, you know the lyrics to their song. They're singing the same song over and over and over again. That's the chorus. They got it memorized. Hum a few bars. We'll join in.

And so God says, okay, Moses, come here. You see that rock over there? Yeah. I want you to speak to the rock. Wait. Speak to the rock? Last time you had me strike. No, no, no. Don't strike it. It's already been struck. Now all you got to do is speak to the rock, and water will come out.

So what does Moses do? Come on, you guys. You know what he does. First of all, he is incensed. He is enraged. He has had it. In fact, he says as much. And this is not good. He says how long are "we" going to put up with you? We? Moe, get over here. What's this "we" stuff? Oh, you're putting — wait a minute. You're putting yourself on the same level as Me? We're the "we"?

God and I have had it up to here with you. How long are we going out to put up with — "we" got to put up with you? And he's so angry, he strikes the rock again. Big mistake.

Why?

Because you ruined the typology.

How?

Jesus was crucified once and for all. You strike the rock once. After the crucifixion, you speak to the rock, and the water will come. He dismantled, destroyed the typology that your pastor takes very seriously. Sorry. That was kind of snarky.



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And you know what it cost him? The Promised Land. Please never see the Promised Land as heaven because it's not. I mean, in terms of typology, the Promised Land are the promises of God that we enter into because there were still battles that had to be fought. Victory was already given, but the battle still had to be fought to possess the Promised Land.

So how does that apply in typology to the Christian's life? We have — some have counted more than 3000 promises in God's word. And we just have to enter into those promises. And sometimes there are going to be battles in order to possess the promises of God. But the victory's already ours. The promise is already given, and all we have to do is enter into that promise. That's what the Promised Land represents.

So think twice next time you talk stink about me behind my back about typology. That was all that is to say — no, you guys don't do that. You're very gracious. All right. How about we move on? Some of you are saying, please do. I will.

Okay, now, we've got a couple of things, though, that I want to point out because notice I'm choosing and using this title of 'Practical Pre-Rapture Prepping.' Why? Because that's what Jude's doing here. This is what you can do to prepare while you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring us into eternal life at the rapture of the Church.

Don't just sit there on your hands and wait. (Humming the melody from ♪ 'Jeopardy' ♪)

First of all, you can make the time go faster, right, when you're doing something. And Jude is saying, this is what you can do while you wait. You can prep. You can be, actually, a pre-rapture prepper. How cool is that? Start up a YouTube channel, "Pre-Rapture Prepper." You'll probably get about four subscribers to a channel like that.

What's a pre-rapture prepper?

Somebody that is preparing for the Rapture. I know that's deeply profound. You're not talking about physical preparations, you know, survival preparations. No. Spiritual preparations. These are practical pre-rapture preparations as we wait for that trumpet sound at the Rapture when Jesus, in His mercy, brings us into His Father's house where He has prepared a place for us.

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Okay, so what are these practical preparations? I found three. You might find more, but no less than three, which are as follows in order.

First: Build yourself up, in *verse 20*.

Second: Keep yourself in, *verse 21*.

And third: Be discerning with, in verses 22 and 23. Before we dive into this, I think all of us, myself included, maybe myself especially, would do well to — hear me out — we would all do well to allow the Holy Spirit unfettered access to that recess in our hearts and minds as we go through this, especially in regards to this exhortation. Because that's really what it is, is an exhortation.

Build yourself up, keep yourself in, be discerning with. That's the preparation you're going to make, and it's an exhortation to make that preparation. It rises to the level of importance in this, the last hour before we're taken out of this Christ-rejecting world.

You know, we don't have much longer to wait. So let's rewind. One last thing, and then we'll jump in. Let's rewind to — let's just pick a year. You know what? Let's pick the year 1948, when Israel was reborn miraculously, prophetically, as a nation, May of 1948.

You're a born-again Christian, and you're reading this passage that we have here in Jude. Build yourself up, keep yourself in, be discerning with, while you wait for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ at the Rapture to bring you into eternal life.

My point? They would have had a much longer wait than we do. That did not work very well at all. I was surely hoping for — Holy Spirit, will You take that and... You know that I pray that God will have you hear a different sermon than the one I preach? In fact, I rely on that to happen.

So, okay, here's the first one in *verse 20*. Build yourself up. Here, Jude, by the Spirit, exhorts us and encourages us to [*Watch this*] build ourselves up in our most holy faith and to also build ourselves up by praying in the Holy Spirit.

Do you realize what he just did here? Thank You, God. Thank You for inspiring Jude.

Because this is the “how” behind the “what.” What do you mean? Jude writes the way he

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writes what he writes to provide us with the “how” of the Holy Spirit to do the “what” of the holy word, our most holy faith.

Let me explain this. How am I going to do that which I am exhorted to do in God's holy word? The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives me the “how” to do the “what” of the holy word. Absent the Holy Spirit, there's no way. That's the only way. That's the “how” of the Holy Spirit to do the “what” of the Holy Word.

Listen, God will never — it is inconsistent and incompatible with who He is and how He is. He will never command us to do anything without also enabling and empowering us to do that which He's commanded us to do. Boy, that was a mouthful. I hope you got it because I'm running out of breath to repeat it.

You see how I got there? That's inconsistent with — God will never command us to do anything and say, okay, I'll get back to you. Okay, I command you to build yourself up in the most holy faith. I'll check in on you later, see how you do. I wish you the best. You're on your own, kid.

I'm like, no! Wait! How am I going to build myself up? The Holy Spirit. Pray in the Holy Spirit. We'll talk about that in a second.

I know a lot of you are looking at me like, oh, no. Oh, no, he's not. Oh, yes, I am. I'm going to explain what it means to pray in the Holy Spirit but build ourselves up in the most holy faith. Do you realize that it is as simple as the word of God and prayer, the word of God and prayer, the word of God and prayer?

That's it. It's the combination of both. It's the word of God and prayer. That's all you need to build yourself up. You don't need a conference. You don't need to buy his 39th book just released in the span of three months. You don't need to subscribe to or be a supporter of or in the elite membership, you know, subscription for just the chosen few at \$19.99 a month.

No, I just need the word of God and prayer. You know how you can know that's all you need? Because those are the two things that Satan will do everything and stop at nothing to keep you from. Let me expound on that.

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You know how it is when you set out to pray and all hell literally breaks loose? I mean, the phone starts ringing. It's always a wrong number. Turn the phone off. Turn it off. Just get out of — yeah, just put it — turn it off. I mean, no, boot it down — I need to qualify it — boot it down and put it down and get it away from you. And turn your computer off too; all of them. Go dark, so you can see the light and hear that still, small voice of the Holy Spirit speak to you through the Holy word because that's how God speaks to you, through His Word.

But here's the thing. God's not going to yell like your pastor because He speaks in a still, small, refining voice. If you can't hear Him, maybe it's because the volume of your life is turned up too loud. Maybe you need to turn the volume down or even better yet, off, so you can hear Him. Because He's always speaking. The question isn't, is He speaking to me? The question is, am I hearing Him? And if I've got the volume of my life turned up so loud, there's no way I'm going to hear the still, small voice of the Lord when He speaks to me.

I had a teacher — I even, actually, at one of our reunions, told him that he was — not a believer, at least not that I'm aware of at the time, anyway. His name was Mr. Bowman, and he had a monotone voice. You know how some people have just a — can you imagine if I had a monotone voice? Some of you are probably praying, “Give my pastor a monotone voice.”

But I mean, they don't have a range. It's all one tone monotone voice (speaking monotone) where they just talk in one tone, and it's just monotone and monotonous, and sometimes it's very soft and very quiet.

Well, Mr. Bowman was like that. The first day of class, Mr. Bowman walks in the room. He says, “Okay, class, I want you to settle down, sit down, and we're going to get started here.” Now leave it to me. I'm like, “Hey! (Yelling) What did you say? Speak up! We can't hear you because we're loud!” Okay, I was loud.

You know what he said? He said, “No, I'm not going to speak up. This is how I speak. You want to hear me? You quiet down.” That was a very long semester for me because the only way I could hear him, if I was going to pass the class, was to quiet down so I could. I have to

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do that with the Holy Spirit. I have to turn the volume off in order to hear that still, small voice of the Holy Spirit.

So let's talk real quick about what it means to pray in the Holy Spirit. This can certainly include praying in a prayer language, praying in the Spirit in an unknown tongue. I have a prayer language. I pray often in my prayer language, especially in those times where I don't know how to pray, or I can't put words to my prayer. They're wordless prayers. Actually, they're groans.

And the Holy Spirit takes those groans, Paul says to the Romans, and He intercedes on our behalf. And He — that's what I mean by He lets you hear a different sermon than the one I'm screaming at You. But He takes those groans, and He intercedes on behalf of us when we don't know how to pray. That's praying in the Spirit. That's praying in the Holy Spirit. It's not just limited to praying in a prayer language in the Holy Spirit.

And by the way, that is not the only evidence, as is wrongly taught, that you've been filled with the Holy Spirit. There are five accounts in the Book of Acts — a lot of people get messed up on this. I better clear this up.

In the Book of Acts, there are five accounts where the Holy Spirit came upon, “Epi” in the Greek, filling them. And the evidence of being filled or baptized, if you prefer, with the Holy Spirit, only two of those times were there tongues. The other three? Wait for it. Boldness. The evidence of being baptized or filled with the Holy Spirit coming upon you was boldness.

So don't let somebody come to you as someone did with me — I'm a new believer at the park and reading the Bible. Couldn't put it down, couldn't get enough of it. I'm sitting there. It was a sunny day. I'm on the grass, in the park, the sun is shining. I'm reading my Bible. I mean, it doesn't get better than that.

And here comes a guy. And he says to me, “I notice that you're reading your Bible.” “That is a firm grasp of the obvious, sir.” He said — so he started asking me questions. “Have you received the Holy Spirit, as evidenced by the speaking in tongues?” I'm like, goodness gracious. I had just started. I'm a — I'm like, no. I have a tongue. I hadn't got to that part yet because I did what — don't do this. I started in the Old Testament. That was brutal,

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especially when you get into Leviticus. I didn't start in the Gospel of John, like we encourage people to.

I started in Genesis. I get to Exodus, Leviticus. Exodus was pretty cool. Leviticus: weird. Numbers, Deuteronomy, “deu,” the repeating of the law. I'm like — I'm a blank slate.

Keep in mind I'm thinking to myself, “Are you kidding me? Every time I sin, I got to sacrifice? That's a lot of livestock.” I mean, I drive by churches, I'm looking for where the livestock is in the parking lot. And I'm not exaggerating. I actually did that. That's how blank of a slate I was. I did not know. I just thought, man, that's called a deterrent. I'm not going to — I don't want to sin because if I go and sin then I got to have a sacrifice.

And then I got to the New Testament and I'm like, oh! I get it now. Jesus. Oh, thank You, Jesus. You're the sacrifice. I don't need to do that. Wow! What a relief. Anyway, I was — there was something deeply profound in there that I wanted to communicate to you. Oh, yeah.

So he comes to me, and he says, “Have you received the Holy Spirit as evidenced by the speaking in tongues?” And it messed me up. And then all of a sudden, I'm starting to doubt that I'm even really saved. Because the implication was if you don't speak in tongues and you don't have the Holy Spirit, then maybe you're not really saved.

I remember weeping. I'm like, wait a minute. What must I do to really get saved? So I went home. I'm like, okay, (Speaking in a babbling way) Honda, Honda, blel, blel, blel, Honda,

[ Laughter ]

Toyota.

[ Laughter ]

It didn't work. Wasn't until, actually, many years later when I was on my face, literally, before the Lord just crying out to Him, and I asked Him to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit came on me in such a powerful way.

First of all, I experienced an instantaneous healing because I was sick. I got up off the floor and I stood up, and I mean, I never looked back. There was a newfound power and purity in

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my life, and a boldness, oh, the boldness. I mean, I had been filled to overflowing by the power of the Holy Spirit. And your life will be like torrents of living water.

Have you seen how powerful flood waters are? They carry houses like toothpicks. That's the Holy Spirit, the power of the Holy Spirit. "Dunamis" in the Greek, where we get our English word dynamite.

Real quick illustration. And we'll get back to our sermon and we will get through this. But this is such an excellent — you know it's good because I didn't come up with this illustration.

So you're there on the beach and you've got this canoe and it's on the sand and you want to get it in the water. So you call all of your friends over, all the brothers. Hey, let's push this thing in. (Straining sounds) So hard. And then the tide comes in, and the water comes up. And effortlessly, you take your pinky, and you push that thing out into the water by the power of that water.

That's what Jesus is saying, that if you would drink of the water that I have to give on this feast, you will never thirst again, but your life will become like torrents of powerful living water. When you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you have the power of the Holy Spirit. And that is so powerful that it gives you the power to do the "what" of God's word. The Holy Spirit empowers you to pray. The Holy Spirit empowers you to read the word of God.

And again, this is why the enemy will bring a drowsiness the likes of which you have never known when you try to read the Bible. You have a hard time going to sleep at night? Put the remote down, turn the TV off, open up your Bible: (Snoring sounds)

Can you imagine, the demons from hell are like, oh, no! He opened the Bible. Put him to sleep. Boom.

[ Laughter ]

I want to take it one step further. Can I? You know why it is — and I'll speak for myself because I've had this happen when I would sit under the teaching of God's word, and there was a particular part of the teaching that Satan didn't want me to hear. Out of nowhere I'm like, (Falling asleep) I mean, I need toothpicks to keep my eyelids open. That's the enemy.

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He doesn't want you to hear that. He wants to keep you from hearing that because he knows that is the deciding factor in building yourself up.

You know how it is when you spend time in the Word, you get into the Word; the Word gets into you? How uplifting is that? **“Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.”** That's how you get built up. That's how you build up your faith, this most holy faith. You got to get into the word. That's the bread of life.

No wonder you're so weak and starving and frail. You need to eat the word of God. It's been said that one week without the Word and prayer makes one weak. Do the spelling on the week/weak. W-E-E-K, and I got to spell it out, W-E-A-K. You need look no further to why it is that you're so weak.

**“The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”** Why is the flesh (Spirit) weak? Because I haven't fed it. I mean the is spirit weak. I haven't fed it. The Spirit is like the lamb and the flesh is like the lion. And that lion is always going to eat that lamb for a lunch, lamb chops. What if I starve that lion and I feed that lamb? That lion can't even get up. The lamb's walking over to it going, Ba, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! That was too much, I know.

The “how” of the Holy Spirit empowers us to do the “what” of the Holy word, which is build ourselves up vis-à-vis prayer to God and the word of God. It's so simple. And that's again, lastly, why it is that Satan, when you want to read the word of God, spend time with God, spend time in prayer, he'll do everything he can to keep you from doing that. That should tell you something, right? The word of God and prayer. Build yourself up. Keep yourself in.

Now, we need to talk about this one because here in *verse 21*, many Bible teachers see it as the central focal point and even the sole goal of the entire letter by virtue of Jude's prior examples. In other words, everyone Jude refers to is an example of not keeping oneself in. Even starting with Cain murdering Abel; it was his choice to keep himself in.

Now, please do not misunderstand this as you got to keep yourself saved. That is absolutely not what Jude is writing here. What Jude is writing here, to quote a hymn of old, in this variation, to keep yourself in the love of God is to keep yourself under the spout where God's love comes out. All of the examples Jude uses, of which there were eight, every single one of them was in but chose to go out from underneath that spout.



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Stay there where God's blessing, God's love comes out. Keep yourself in the One who keeps you, who blesses you, who loves you. So this is really the focal point of the entire letter to keep yourself in, and don't let yourself out of God's love. Especially now.

What do you mean?

If there was ever a time that we needed to stay under that spout where God's blessing and mercy and grace and love and compassion and all of the above comes out, that time is now. See, we tend to go outside of God's love to our own peril. We don't keep ourselves in. Forget building yourself up. You don't keep yourself in.

See, these are on us. The onus is on us. God's love is there. The Holy Spirit is there. The word of God is there. The love of God is there. The question is, are we where the love of God is?

Thursday night, I mentioned this First Service in the Prophecy Update. We're going to finish, Lord willing, Ezekiel 47 and 48. Also we're going to partake of communion too. We'll have you out of here by midnight. Bring your pajamas and toothbrush.

But the very last — here's the title that I chose for the Bible study Thursday night, the very last four words of the *Book of Ezekiel* in *Chapter 48*, the last four words, all caps. If there was an emoji, we could put an emoji on it too. All caps, four words: "THE LORD IS THERE." The end.

The Lord's there? Well, I'll be there, then. Let's flip it around. Yeah, the Lord's not going to be there. Well, then I'm not going either. You see what I'm doing here? I want to be where He is. I want to be under that spout where His blessings come out.

And I want to stay there. I don't want to go anywhere if He's not there. Is the Lord there? I'm there. I'm staying there. You're not get rid of me either. You can try to kick me out, but I'm going to stay in. You're not getting rid of me. That's where the love of God, the mercy of God, the blessings of God come out? That's where I'll be.

No, but here's the enemy over here going, hey, look at this over here. Oh! And before we know it, we've moved away, stayed away, better said. And now we're out from underneath that spout that we're admonished and exhorted to keep ourselves in, the love of God.

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My church on the mainland, many years ago — one of my staff guys who was my administrator told me that in raising his kids — these were, great family, amazing kids, love the Lord, walking with the Lord to this day. He said he would teach them about the circle of love, and he would draw it out. This is especially helpful for visual people like myself.

And he drew a circle and he put it in that circle: God, mom, dad, love. And then he had two little dots: His son and daughter. He said, okay, you guys are in the circle of love. Now, it's your choice if want to stray away. And if you get out of that circle, then you're out of that love by your own choosing. That's your decision.

The point is, stay in that circle because that's the scope, those are the boundaries, those are the goalposts, if you prefer. Stay in and keep yourself in. And there's a real subtle suggestion here that this is not necessarily effortless. I mean, it would seem like, yeah, no problem.

No, it is a problem just by virtue of the fact that God would inspire Jude to encourage us and exhort us to keep ourselves in God's love means that there's this propensity for us to get outside of God's love. Otherwise, why would he even bother to exhort us to keep ourselves in?

We all have this proclivity to end up somehow getting out. And it happens very subtly and sometimes unknowingly, unwittingly, even innocently. Not to excuse it, but to explain it. I mean, it just, it happens over time, and you don't realize how far you've strayed out until you look back and you realize, whoa, how did I get here? How do I get back?

Well, that's *Revelation Chapter 2*, the letter to the church in Ephesus, the Ephesian Church. Notice, please know, this is not you “lost” your first love. That means you've got to go find it. No, you “left” your first love.

Well, how am I going to get back in that love? I should have kept myself in that love. How do I get back in that love? Because I left.

Well, you remember, you repeat, and you repent. I mean, you remember, you — it's been a long week. Let me try that again. Gimme another chance. You remember, you repent, and you repeat. It's a perfect three-point sermon, built in, packaged, three-point sermon in the can: *Revelation Chapter 2*.

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Remember what it was like when you were first in love? I mean, when you were in love, you were like, I mean, first of all, nobody could stand to be around you guys. When you were first in love, you were so sappy and silly, just even the way you talked to each other. You would open the door for her. You would hold her hand [Aww] when you were first in love.

A few years go by. You're not opening the door for her anymore. It's more like this: (Yelling) Get in! What's taking you so long? We're going to be late! What's the matter with you? And then you slam the door. You don't hold her hand anymore. You're walking in front of her. And you don't buy her flowers anymore either.

Isn't there a song about that? So yeah, I remember what it was like when, at first, because this is your first love. So I remember. Now what am I going to do? I'm going to repent. What does repent mean? You do a 180. You change, an about face. You change your mind. You remember, you repent, do a 180, and repeat.

What does that mean?

Repeat the first works.

What are the first works?

What worked at first, when you were first in love with your first love.

“Well, I don't feel like it.”

We were talking about this First Service. “I don't feel like it.” The feelings will follow. Do what worked at first, and the love, when you come back in, will just flood you and flood back in. Just repeat what worked at first.

Guys, can we talk? Wives, give us just a second. This is a guy thing. I made a suggestion to this friend of mine on the mainland. I said, “When was the last time you bought her flowers?” He’s like, “Was that 1970?” I'm like, “Forget it. Buy her flowers.”

You know what he says to me? As God as my witness, it floored me. He said, “If I bought and brought my wife flowers and I walk the door with them, you know what she's going to say to me? ‘What did you do?’”

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I'm like, "Wow, that is so sad. Really? It's been that long? When was last time you opened the door for her? She's going to look at you like, "what did you do with my husband?" Who are you, you imposter? Open the door for her."

I took my wife to a doctor's appointment, and I opened the door for her. I have to confess; I hadn't done that a while. And oh, my goodness. She puts her hand out, and we're holding hands. We've been married for 35 years. Is there nothing more beautiful than to see a couple that's been together that long that are holding hands with each other?

And did you know that there's a physiological — this is no extra charge, by the way — there's a physiological hormone or chemical that's released? It's called oxytocin, not OxyContin. Oxytocin: the touch chemical, the love chemical. And it releases all the other stuff, endorphins... And I'll leave it at that one.

And when you touch: A hug, holding hands — you know, many years ago in the last century, the turn of the last century, they had this orphanage where all of these babies were dying. And they couldn't figure out why.

So they had some of these experts come in. And they said the problem is these babies are just sitting there in these cribs and nobody's holding them. So they started just picking them up. And they had shifts. And they would just hold and touch and love and kiss and hug these babies. And never a baby died again. That's the way God made us. (Frustrated sound)

Real quick. Famous last words. You know, back in 2021 — I'm going to be very careful here because this is on YouTube and Facebook. You know in 2021 they said, "social distancing," and they put up the plexiglass, and "six feet apart," Six? Not five. Not seven even. Six. Six feet apart. Don't sing. Don't breathe. Don't talk. Don't touch.

Those are the very things that God made us to do to thrive. There's something that happens physiologically, emotionally, psychologically, spiritually when you touch, love, hug, kiss.

Paul says, "**Greet each other with a brotherly kiss.**" You know it's a custom in my country. We kiss on the cheek, you know, sometimes more than once. (Kiss sounds) Men. It's weird. And more than once. Twice. I'm like, enough already. My cheek's all red and everything. That's how they show affection. The culture here in Hawaii, the aloha, you know, the love, the hug, the kiss.

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This is all by God's design for us to touch each other and be with each other and love on each other. How much more important it is then with the Lord? Keep yourself in God's love. Do not practice distancing from the Lord. No, you need to keep yourself in the love of the Lord.

Okay, we're done with this last one, verses 22 and 23. It's like the best for last. I need another hour, but we'll do our best here. Be discerning with. This is interesting for a number of reasons, chief of which is that Jude goes from the inward to the outward.

What do you mean?

When we're built up and kept in, we're then able to build up and keep in others. However, doing so requires keen spiritual discernment. Did you notice that at the end of 23, the end of the verse, I mean, **'lest your clothes be stained by the excrement of their garments'?**

I promise you that's nobody's life verse on their wallpaper or, you know, frame. That's my — wow, God's really ministered to me through this verse. What is that saying? That's saying there are three ways that you need to discern how to deal with these people.

The first ones are the ones that have been deceived. You need to deal very mercifully with them. Be very careful with them. Be very loving to them. For those, you be merciful. They were duped, they were deceived, they were misled, they were led astray by these men that crept in. And now they want back in. So you need to restore them. Be merciful to them.

Others, you might need to be a little more firm with them because they're heading for the fire, and you need to snatch them out of the fire. But you're doing it because you love them enough to do it.

See, I know that you love me if you'll do the hard thing with me and for me because **"faithful are the wounds of a friend."** They can be trusted. But you're my enemy if you only tell me what I want to hear and multiply kisses and flatter me. You're not my friend. You don't love me.

See, if you love me, you're going to speak truth to me. Because you speak the truth in love because of love. And yeah, it hurts. But I'm only telling you what I would want you to tell

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me if I were you. Because I love you. I love you enough to jeopardize our friendship by speaking the truth to you.

The course you're on, the direction you're going, it doesn't end well for you. And I love you enough to say something to your face. I know you're going to hate my guts afterwards, and you're going to unfriend me on social media, but I still love you enough, and I'm willing to take that risk.

So you tell them the truth: The path you're on, it seems right to you, but it's the path, the way that leads to death. You're on the wrong path. And I love you enough to say something. And sometimes you have to be firm. I know we call it "tough love," but I think it's even more than that. It's hard truth and it's going to wound, and it's going to hurt. Initially, they might resent you, but eventually they'll thank you.

And conversely, if you only flatter them and multiply kisses, they might thank you. But eventually, I promise you, they'll resent you. Why didn't you tell me the truth? Why didn't you say something? You must not love me. That's self-love. That's why you didn't tell me. You must not love me. If you're unwilling to tell me the truth, that means you don't love me.

I know my wife loves me a lot. She — I say, okay, good. That's good enough for today, honey. Can we just... whoa, whoa, whoa. There's only so much a guy can take. Ouch.

So again, you're merciful to the ones that you discern that you need to be merciful to. Be very gentle with them. *Galatians 6*, "**Restore them gently,**" humbly.

And be careful. This is the third discernment. Some of them — oh, boy, how do I do this? Help me, Holy Spirit, please. You're going to discern that you have to be careful to — this is why Paul says, in Galatians, be careful lest you yourselves get stained by that which they have been stained by.

And I won't — well, I might have to. It's in the original. These are bodily fluids that have stained their undergarments. Okay, I said it. That's the truth. I could have probably said it better.

But that's what Jude's writing here. It's echoing what the Apostle Paul saying. You're going to go and you're going to be very discerning with this, especially this group. Because you've

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got three groups here you have to distinguish between and discern. So this third group, you be very careful. You're going to try to speak truth to them and restore them and get them back under the spout where God's love comes out. But in the process, don't stumble yourself because the temptations there. Don't be soiled or stained with that which they've been soiled and stained with.

I will take it one step further, and then we'll close, and I am done. This is for spiritually mature Christians. Why? Because it requires spiritual discernment. And that's not something that — I mean, God, certainly in His grace, can give you discernment at the moment that you need it, but it comes with spiritual maturity. It's a discernment of spirits where you're so in tune with the Holy Spirit and God's holy word that you can spot it. And you know how to deal with it.

That's discernment, and it comes with maturity. So you know the best way to carefully and prayerfully deal with that situation or that person because you have to be so careful with them. And you've got to be careful, take care yourself, take heed for yourself because this particular individual can, in turn, cause you to stumble and be stained.

I know I said that was one last thing, but okay, this will be the last, last thing. I want to focus in on and leave you with this be merciful discernment because I don't think we have any problem with the firm part. I mean, we're actually pretty good at that. I don't think we have to be exhorted. I mean, we got that one down. I mean, just ask me. Let me at them. I'll take care of that. Maybe even the third group that we discern.

But how about the first one? I mean, these people are hurting. They've been deceived. They're — first of all, you've got to know that they're turning inward, and they're angry at themselves for being deceived, for being so gullible and naive. So there's already self-loathing.

Now, you're not going to come in there and pile on. I told someone the other day. I said, "You know, I don't need help. You know, I don't need you to be hard on me because I do a really good job myself. I'm pretty hard on myself. I don't need the help. I mean, I've got it down pretty good. I tell you what I do need help with is the mercy part, just showing mercy and kindness and grace."

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Because these people are hurting, and they need to be restored. And the last thing they need is to be read the riot act. “You stupid...”

I'm going to out myself again here. That's the kind of thing I think to myself: You stupid idiot. My wife will ask me, “Why did you do that?” My answer — I'm learning— 35 years of marriage — “Because I'm a stupid idiot. That's why I did it.”

Okay. Can I just leave you with one more? No, this is, this is good. It'll be worth it. The wife says something to her husband one day, and the husband says to her, “How can something so stupid come out of someone so beautiful?” To which the wife responds, “Well, honey, God made me beautiful so you would marry me. And God made me stupid so I would marry you.”

[ Laughter ]

I'm going to quit while I'm ahead. David, come up. Stand up. That was the best ending I could come up with. Okay, that's where the Holy Spirit comes in.

Lord, I did my best. Now You have to do the rest because this is, this is good stuff, and there's a lot here. It could arguably be something that could warrant taking more time to understand. But that's where the Holy Spirit is going to come in, the “how” the Holy Spirit, which we desperately need.

Lord, You've got to take it from here. Apply this to our lives. Bless this to our hearts. Grant us this grace, O God, because this is so apropos for where we live in these last days. Maybe someone here watching online has not kept themselves in or built themselves up. Forget about building others up or discerning the need to get others back in themselves. Lord, would You encourage them, restore them, love on them?

Lord, for all of us, build us up as we wait and prepare. We want to be spiritually built up strong. We want to be kept in, waiting, so when that trumpet sounds, we're ready to go. Thank You, Lord, for this passage. Bless it to our hearts. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.