

Jude - verses 20-25 a study for Gulf Coast Baptist Church
Sunday Evening Breakouts by Steve Thomas 7-21-24

Introduction

With the description of the false teachers clearly delivered, Jude ended his letter with actionable steps for the believer. Each of the OT accounts were situations where God took care of the evil doer and the believer was commanded to clear the area. God will take care of evil. It is not incumbent on the believer to battle evil. When Jude admonishes the believer to earnestly contend for the faith, these actions were what he was referring to.

The believer is given actionable steps to contend earnestly all the following are active participles

- Building up ourselves in the faith belonging to us
- Keeping ourselves in the love of God
- Looking for (to receive to oneself, to accept) the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ
- Have compassion (mercy) on some making a difference (discriminating/choosing)
- Save by seizing

Building yourselves up in the most holy faith

The believer who has been told that God's grace is equivalent to lasciviousness needed to understand that God has provided a defense against the spiritual enemies. "The faith" is a body of doctrine given to the saints that contains the mental patterns that the believer would use to defend against each of the three Spiritual enemies. The believer will rear up a holy temple (1 Cor 3:17, 6:19, 2 Cor 6:16, Eph 2:21) when he yields to the Holy Spirit. It will be a temple of God's construction, but the believer must yield the control to the Spirit.

The result is a house of God, the practical step is worshiping in the Spirit. The word for "praying" is our word for worship. Worship is *repeating back to God those things that He has said of Himself, giving Him the full weight of His being*. NT worship is distinct from OT worship in the fact that OT worship had a physical component, bowing, kneeling, etc. The believer has only to agree with God about what God has said of Himself, this can happen in song, or by word of mouth. When the believer is focused on God, the Spirit has full sway, defeating enemies, or forming Christ in the believer. The transformation of the believer creates a place where God Himself will dwell. (John 15:4; 1 John 2:24-28). Darby states:

"He cultivates communion with God, and profits through grace by the revelations of His love. The Christian has his own proper sphere of thought, in which he hides himself from the evil that surrounds him, and grows in the knowledge of God from whom nothing can separate him. His own portion is always the more evident to him, the more the evil increases. His communion with God is in the Holy Ghost, in whose power he prays, and who is the link between God and his soul; and his prayers are according to the intimacy of this relationship, and animated by the intelligence and energy of the Spirit of God."

Keeping ourselves in the love of God

The believer is not the one who retains proximity to the Love of God. Paul tells the believer that nothing can separate the believer from God's love in Romans 8:35-39. But the believer can keep himself in the consciousness, the communion, and the enjoyment of God's love. When God's love is forefront in the believer's mind, he will not choose lasciviousness over grace.

When eternal life is discussed, it is not the everlasting life or length of life which is being emphasized, but God's quality of life that is present in the believer. John discusses this at length in chapter 5 of his first epistle. When the believer is spiritual, and God is at ease in the believer, God's quality of life rises to the top and is able to be put on display. The believer is able to direct the Spirit's fruit towards the situation that is called for.

Having compassion, Making a difference

This phrase is used by many to signify evangelism. There is nothing in the context that would suggest that the believer contends against his own flesh by leading another to Christ, thus saving him from the fire. But that is often how this passage is taught. The garment spotted with the flesh, is the fitting subject in the context of lasciviousness. The phrase "making a difference" has the same root word as back in verse 9 where Michael was contending with Satan. Michael yeided the field and allowed God to rebuke Satan. The believer must do the same. The actionable step in this part is to have compassion, and save other believers from the horrors of sin by putting to death the flesh, instead of allowing it to reign in the believer's life. The believer's love will save the "doubters".

Seeking the pure life, not the life of license, approaching God using the provisions of grace given in the believer's benefits package, will save the doubter, and will put God's quality of life on display. "Lay hold on eternal life" 1 Tim 6:12, "work out your own salvation" Phil 2:12 are similar thoughts for the believer.

God our Savior is able to keep us from falling

Jude finished his letter with a doxology pointing the believer to the one who has the power (*dunamai*). Reference is made to what Christ is doing now as the believer's high priest, and what He will do when we are ushered into God's presence, finally without our sin natures.

Conclusion

When the believer focuses on God's love, yielding the field to the Spirit, and allows the Spirit to put God's character on full display. He is contending for the faith. Anything less is to yield to the believer's enemies and to give power to the flesh, that God defeated at the cross.