

Jude continues his warning against false teachers and encourages us to remain faithful to the Lord in spite of the false doctrine being taught. We should have compassion on those who have fallen prey to the lies being taught, rescuing them from the danger they are in.

In the intervening verses between the last lesson this one, Jude quotes a prophesy given to Enoch predicting the coming judgment that God will execute against the ungodly when He will hold them accountable for all that they have said and done. This prophesy is not recorded in the Bible but in another writing called the *Book of Enoch* (otherwise known as 1 Enoch).

**Verses 14-16:** *“<sup>14</sup> And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, <sup>15</sup> To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”*

He continues to describe these false teachers who not only walk after their own lusts, but use their mouths to murmur, complain, boast, and flatter others in order to get what they want.

*“<sup>16</sup> These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.”*

He continues in our lesson then to remind us that we have already been warned of these false teachers by the apostles.

<sup>17</sup> But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; <sup>18</sup> How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

**“But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ”** - Jude is acknowledging that he himself is not an apostle, but is reminding us of the warnings which the apostles had already made. The coming of the mockers was not a surprise to them but God had revealed to them that it would happen.

**“How that they told you there should be mockers [scoffers] in the last time”** - No doubt the apostles had verbally warned them of the coming of those who would scoff at the truths of the gospel in addition to warning them in writing. We have warnings in scripture by Paul, Peter and John. However, Jude may be referring specifically to 2 Peter 2, which Jude borrows heavily from in order to write this epistle. The “last time” (or “last days”) refers to the period of human history between Christ’s ascension and His return – the period we now live in.

**“who should walk after their own ungodly lusts”** - These mockers are not interested in the truth but in fulfilling their own ungodly desires. In fact, they reject the truth because it conflicts with their ungodly desires. This is the core of our sin nature: rebellion against the truth of God and following our own will, thereby making it the god that we obey.

<sup>19</sup> These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

**“These be they who separate themselves”** - Most commentators say that the word “themselves” is not in some manuscripts, giving the reading “these be they who separate.” In fact, many translations render the passage as “These be they who cause divisions...” If this is true then these “certain men crept in unawares” do not promote unity but divisions among God’s people. If however, the KJV translation is more correct then the interpretation may be that these men keep the members of the church who genuinely love and follow Jesus Christ at arm’s length and avoid close fellowship with them.

**“sensual”** - The Greek word is most often translated “natural” in the KJV. Jude seems to be saying that these men follow their natural senses rather than the Spirit of God. They follow what looks good to them, sounds good to them, etc. rather than trust themselves to the leadership of the Spirit of God. Following God means that we must look past our natural senses in faith to what God has promised.

**“having not the Spirit”** - They do not follow the Spirit because they do not have the Spirit. This is further evidence that they do not belong to God. **Rom. 8:9b** *“Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”*

<sup>20</sup> But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, <sup>21</sup> Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

These verses are best understood by skipping momentarily the middle part of the statement and then coming back to it.

**“But ye, beloved...Keep yourselves in the love of God”** - In contrast to those who do not have the Spirit mentioned in the previous verse, Jude exhorts his readers to “keep yourselves in the love of God.” He is not saying that we are to work so that we do not lose our salvation but rather that this is where we should focus our lives. Instead of following after fleshly lusts like the men he’s warning us about, we are to follow after the love of God, being secure in the knowledge of that love.

**“building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost”** - How do we keep ourselves in the love of God? By returning to the center portion of Jude’s statement we see that we are to center our lives in the love of God by:

1. *Building ourselves up on our most holy faith:* Just as we are to “earnestly contend for the faith” (v. 3), we are also to build ourselves up on the foundation of faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Strengthening our faith through study of the word of God helps us to build ourselves up.
2. *Praying in the Holy Ghost:* Praying with the assistance of the Holy Spirit connects us to God as our power source and our source of guidance and encouragement.

**“looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life”** - Centering our lives in the love of God encourages us to always look to Jesus Christ as our source of mercy and eternal life. Doing these things helps us to appreciate the love of God and the mercy that He has shown us by giving us eternal life.

<sup>22</sup> And of some have compassion, making a difference: <sup>23</sup> And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Commentators believe that these two verses deal with two or possibly three groups of people in varying degrees of error concerning the gospel. Some translations render these verses in a way that imply three groups.

**“And of some have compassion, making a difference”** - These are people who have honest doubts about the gospel after being exposed to the behaviors and teaching of the false teachers. We are to have compassion on them and make a difference in their lives by exposing the errors and bringing these people into a better understanding of the truth.

**“And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire”** - These people are deeper in trouble for they have started believing the false teachings and need to be pulled “out of the fire.”

**“hating even the garment spotted by the flesh”** - We should rescue these people from false doctrine but Jude warns us to be careful (“save with fear”) because it is too easy to become tempted by sin ourselves. Figuratively speaking, we should hate even the garment spotted or stained by the sins of the flesh. We should be careful not to “get our clothes dirty” while doing our rescue work. **Gal. 6:1** *“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”*

<sup>24</sup> 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,

Jude describes Christ’s ability to guarantee our salvation in two stages: (1) here in this life and (2) in His presence in heaven.

**“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling [to not stumble; stand firm]”** - We will not be perfect here on earth as we endeavor to live for Jesus Christ, but He is able to keep us standing firm in Him so that we do not stumble and fall and so lose our salvation. He is the only One Who could have saved us and He is the only One Who can preserve us in Him.

**“and to present you faultless [without blemish] before the presence of his glory”** - The blood of Christ washes our sins away so that when we at last stand in His glorious presence, we will be able to stand without any blemish of sin. There will be no fear of rejection because Christ shed His blood on the cross for us in order to redeem us.

**“with exceeding joy”** - Imagine the exceeding joy we will experience when we stand before Him without any shame or guilt, being able to enjoy His presence for all eternity! Some commentators suggest that the “exceeding joy” may refer primarily to the joy that Jesus Christ will have in seeing what His sacrifice on the cross has accomplished. **Heb. 12:2** *“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

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

**“To the only wise God our Saviour”** - Christ has done His work of redemption according to His wisdom for no one tricked or coerced Him into saving us. He knew exactly what He was doing and He did it willingly. **Eph. 1:4-6** *“<sup>4</sup> According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: <sup>5</sup> Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, <sup>6</sup> To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”*

**“be glory and majesty”** - The kings and rulers of this world parade around in their pomp and circumstance, but they pale in comparison to the glory and majesty of Jesus Christ!

**“dominion and power”** - Christ has absolute power and dominion over both heaven and earth! **Matt. 28:18** (after the resurrection) *“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”*

**“both now and ever”** - Christ has this glory and power now and He will continue to possess it forever.

**“Amen”** - This word comes from a Hebrew word meaning “truly” or “so let it be.” The Greek variation means “firm” or “faithful.” Jude is expressing his confidence in the truths he’s written in these last two verses. He’s confident in the faithfulness of God to do as He’s promised.