

## KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD

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### Jude 5-22

But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage. But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.

### Maintain Your Life with God

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

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The book of Jude, who was the half brother of Jesus, THE Savior of the world, begins his letter first with a greeting and then overall he presents a sober warning to God's people, to be reminded of how God has dealt with His people in the past, to also be aware of those who were clearly not of God, were not serving God with a pure heart, and who were only seeking what they could get out of this world versus following after the will and promises of God. Then at the end of our passage of Scripture Jude gives things that his readers or listeners must do. **1)** Allow ourselves to be built up in the faith (which a primary emphasis for us should be in studying the Word of God) **2)** praying in the Spirit (for ourselves and for others) **3)** keep in the love of God (we have a choice to love or hate) **4)** show extra compassion to those in need of encouragement in the faith. We all need that from time to time, right? Number 5 could be, in the wisdom that comes from God, in longsuffering and patience and love, to lead some from the path that they're on that is leading them to destruction.

There are many examples of those that rebelled against God in the Bible, Old Testament and New Testament and Jude makes mention of a few of them. The contrast to that is in what Jude states towards the end of our Scripture to where he says to "keep yourselves in the love of God." If we keep ourselves in the love of God all else falls in place for us. Right? Jesus said the greatest commandment was to love God with all of our heart, soul, strength, and mind and then the second commandment is of the same to where we are to love others as ourselves, (**Mark 12:30-32**) or really as Christ also mentioned, that we are commanded to love others as Christ has loved us. (**John 13:34**) All other commandments are satisfied as we abide in the love of God.

We can first consider how Jude introduced himself and then we'll look at how he addressed his readers which is a telling of anyone who is a child of God, who is keeping themselves in the love of God. Jude calls himself a bondservant of Jesus and the brother of James. Notice he didn't try and puff himself up, saying that he is a brother Jesus the Christ. That really has to be the starting point and operating principle for all of God's children, all of those who are believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. We are being led to believe by the Holy Spirit that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the Living God" (**Matthew 16:16**) as Peter proclaimed to Jesus, and then the next step of faith is for us to surrender to the will of God, abiding in Christ which is the revelation of God's great love towards us and as children of God we are then to live in that love, embracing that love, and sharing that love of God. Since there was still slavery present at the time of Jesus' life and ministry and beyond during the acts of the apostles, those words that were spoken by Jesus and the apostles in describing our relationship to Jesus as being His bondservant resonated with them. With the people of this day and age, it can be thought or said that the analogy of slavery in regards to our

relationship to Jesus is not politically correct. Yet what it does is gives us an understanding that we were bought at a very high price, that is, the blood of Jesus AND the life of Jesus and that, as Paul said, we are no longer our own, that we are His. Being His, that is, being Christ's definitely means that we are intended to submit to the will of God, but it also ensures us all of the many promises that we have, as children of God. Listen though to what the Apostle Paul says, as he ties together being bondservant's of Christ's to God's glory, "For you were bought at a price; therefore **glorify God** in your body and in your spirit, **which are God's.**" (1 Corinthians 6:20) A little later in Paul's letter to the Corinthians he says, "You were **bought at a price**; do not become slaves of men." (1 Corinthians 7:23) What that hopefully says to all of us is that slavery of man by man is bad, but being a servant of Christ is good, very good, and doing the will of God is **good** and **profitable** to us. After all Jesus is our lead example. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, **to the glory of God the Father.**" There it is again---to the glory of God. In God's kindness and mercy towards us in Christ Jesus He is glorified! You see how that is different from all the other religions of man? We are not created by God for our own enlightenment and god-like state. We were created by God for His glory as He has demonstrated to us how is is deserving of that glory in His kindness, and goodness, and mercy towards us in Christ Jesus. And then in the end, we will be joint-heirs with Jesus and we will be glorified together---in Christ Jesus! (Romans 8:17)

Truer words have never been spoken-for it is a promise from God to all those who are in Christ Jesus. The prophet Isaiah, in quoting God Himself said, "Everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him." (Isaiah 43:7) We were all created for God's glory. Are you living your life as though you were created for God's glory? How is that, you may ask? God is glorified in His great love and mercy He has shown toward us! "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, **made us alive together with Christ** (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.**" (Ephesians 2:4-7) Are we living our lives as though we are alive in Christ or do we

do we have as a testimony to others that we are just on this planet for ourselves? You can certainly look around and see those who have no intention of living for God's glory. Yet all things (including us) were created for **His PLEASURE** and **PURPOSE** and **GLORY**. (**Philippians 2:13**, **Isaiah 43:7**, **Revelation 4:11**) An added bonus to God's glory is this: Jesus said, "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples." (**John 15:8**) The kindness, goodness, and love that we share of Christ with others glorifies God! Yet we will never get anywhere in going our own way. Only in His Way will we get to what has been purposed for us by God. As Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (**John 14:6**) Within the smaller picture of our viewpoint as well as the bigger picture of God's eternal plan Jesus spells it out for us, "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (**John 15:5**) Jesus was speaking in the here and now as well as the eternal. Jesus made it more than clear that it is only in Him and in His Way that we will overcome death and inherit eternal life as He said, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven." (**Matthew 7:21**) The psalmist of Psalm 85 speaks of our salvation and our calling unto **God's glory**. "I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for He will speak peace to His people and to His saints; But let them not turn back to folly. Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land." (**Psalms 85:8-9**) That is where we are heading, for the **glory of God** to rest on Mount Zion. I want to be there for that, in God's glory, don't you? You know what is the opposite of being in God's eternal glory? Jude mentions it. In "darkness forever", which is void of the goodness and love and glory of God.

Getting back to Jude's letter, he addressed his readers or listeners as those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus. If we are sanctified in Christ Jesus, are we showing that? Being sanctified means that we are set apart in God's holiness, to be holy as He is holy (**1 Peter 1:15**) To be more thorough in our studying this passage of Scripture, some translations say, instead of sanctified by God it translates as beloved or loved by God. The Apostle John addresses the whole issue in his first epistle to where if we are a child of God, if we say that we know God, then we will be showing the love of God. "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might **live through Him**." (**1 John 4:7-9**) We love Him and we love others as He first loved us. As we have looked at in previous weeks, we are, as children of God, His light, His love, His representatives, His ambassadors. As Paul said, "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading

through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God."  
**(2 Corinthians 5:20)**

Jude explains in this passage of Scripture, that first of all, he is reminding God's people to consider the examples that God has given to us in His Word. And yes, the Old Testament stories are not just stories that are there to see how the Israelites failed God so that we can just read it and shake our heads and say, "boy were they stupid." After all, it could be said about each and every one of us, that at times we were foolish or stupid. "[F]or all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (**Romans 3:23**) We are only "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is **in Christ Jesus.**" (**Romans 3:24**) This isn't a message pointing to salvation by works. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." (**Ephesians 2:8-9**) Once again, it is **IN CHRIST JESUS!** Yet as we continue to read in **Ephesians 2:10**, "we are His workmanship, created **in Christ Jesus** for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (**Ephesians 2:10**) Once again, in Christ we are HIS! We were created and intended to be used of God for His glory. Let us keep in mind though that we will be richly rewarded for our putting our trust in Him, guaranteed!

The first human example of rebellion that Jude mentions is of those of Sodom and Gomorrah who were living their lives in sexual immorality. What is that? Any form of sexual perversion that is contrary to the will and purpose of God of course. What did God speak to Adam and Eve about their purpose? "God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (**Genesis 1:28**) In the next chapter God said, " Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." (**Genesis 2:24**) I'm not hating on anyone, just giving a warning as did Jude, that God will not tolerate being mocked and His creation and purpose being defiled. God sent a flood in the days of Noah and He decimated Sodom and Gomorrah. The final judgment of God is spelled out for us in the book of Revelation to where the bowls of His wrath will be poured out on this earth. I am not judging anyone as God's Word says to us, "But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." We will all be judged according to our work but the judgment no one wants to face is the great white throne of judgment as it is called. "Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the

books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." (**Revelation 20:11-15**) I want to be found in the Book of Life, don't you? I choose to put my trust **in Christ Jesus** my Lord and Savior! "But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You." (**Psalms 5:11**) That is where we can, as Paul said, "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!" (**Philippians 4:4**)

A few of other examples that Jude refers to are the way of Cain, the error of Balaam for profit and the rebellion of Korah. With Cain, we know God didn't accept his sacrifice of fruit of the ground and he then killed his brother Abel. That shows us a couple of things. First of all God accepted Abel's sacrifice of his flock as it pointed to the blood sacrifice, the perfect sacrifice of Jesus and the shedding of His blood but I'm sure it had to do with their motives also. We can see from Cain's rebellion against God and killing his brother that his heart wasn't towards the will of God. God told Cain that if he does right that he would be accepted but Cain wanted it done his way. Once again Jesus tells us, "I AM the Way." Satan and his minions have been trying to stomp out, kill, silence, and destroy God's people and to distort the Word of God from the beginning but here we are still reading God's eternal Word and living in the hope that we have in Christ Jesus. "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (**Romans 8:38-39**) I'm holding on to that promise, how about you? We must therefore, keep ourselves in the love of God!

The rebellion of Korah and those who came against the leadership of Moses is the other example Jude refers to. What we know from the Word is that God is a God of order where the enemy of our souls is one of chaos. We are told to "Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil; for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men. "Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another." (**Romans 14:16-19**) There is ALWAYS going to be those who will try and stir the pot of dissension or to come against God's children as we are sharing and showing the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ. Moses, arguably the greatest leader that God ever called (one exception being Christ of course) and there were still people coming against him saying "who are you to

tell us what to do?" Moses, who was described as the humblest man on the face of the earth, a man who was so close to God that his face shown to where he had to wear a veil over his face, a man who had regular conversations with God, and there were still people who rebelled against him and they were swallowed up by the earth. God has a specific calling and purpose for each of us, that includes all of the leaders of our government, whether they are Christian or not, and we are to be, once again, "pursu[ing] the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another." As mentioned, it is not up to me or anyone else to judge someone but if we are grieving or trying to tear down one of God's people, they will fall into the hand and judgment of God and may God have mercy on them.

"These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves." Sound familiar? Unfortunately, there will always be those who have no intention ever of loving God, serving God, or looking to do the will of God which is in the sharing and showing the love and gospel of Jesus Christ. But we are called to "love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you?" (**Matthew 5:44-46**) "These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage. But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit."

We certainly can't control the actions of others and we certainly can't determine for ourselves who we think is going to have the goodness of God lead them to repentance or in who God is having coals heaped on their heads but we can let God continue to "work in us to will and to do for His good pleasure." (**Philippians 2:13**) What that means for a child of God is that there will be many times of grief, sorrow, tears, and sorrow. One day God will right the wrong, make new all things with a new heaven and a new earth and "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." (**Revelation 21:4**) For us we have to have the perspective that Paul had that "to live is Christ and to die is gain." (**Philippians 1:21**) That doesn't always take away the pain or sorrow or tears. God knows, that we are in tribulation even now. If the enemy of our souls comes to tell you that you aren't going to make it, that you aren't worthy of God's salvation, you can say as Michael the archangel said, "the Lord rebuke you!" "I am a child of

the Most High God, I have been bought at a great price, the life and blood of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!" We are to put our trust in Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith. God knows who are His and those who are just playing the game for their own purpose and not for the glory of God. To that I say, as I hope you will too, "to God be the glory!" And brothers and sisters in Christ may we all keep ourselves in the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Savior and Lord.

**PRAYER**

"Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever."

Amen.