

## Rescuing Others

Text : **Jude 17-25** ( 3<sup>rd</sup> )

### INTRODUCTION :

**A. Jude is a short, but powerful book written by Jude, the Lord's brother.**

1. Identifies himself as “the bondservant of Jesus Christ.” ( serving his older brother )
2. Jude says he is a brother of James. ( **James was highly respected and well-known.** )

**B. In our two previous lessons from this book, we have observed the principle message of the book to be an admonition for Christians to guard their hearts.**

**C. 1<sup>st</sup> lesson : Four principle heresies are discussed in the book.**

1. They turned grace into license.
2. They slandered authority and the doctrine. ( **They had neither humility nor respect.** )
3. They acted proud and grumbled.
4. They denied Jesus as the only sovereign and Lord.

**D. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lesson : Five ways to combat these heresies.**

1. Contend for the faith. ( **agonize, put forth strong effort, compete at full strength** )
2. Understand what the gospel is.
3. Know what God is like. ( **He delivers, but also judges.** )
4. Realize there is a battle.
5. Constantly be building up yourself in the faith.

**With this third lesson we want to take up where we left off with the second lesson,**

**Read ... Jude 20-25**

### **I. Each Christian must take responsibility for his own spiritual development.**

**A. Though we live in an age where people do not want to take responsibility for Our actions, God will hold each one of us individually accountable.**

1. **ill. – A Lady sued McDonalds because she was burned by coffee.**  
( **If the coffee had been served cold, that lady would have complained. She did a stupid thing and didn't take responsibility for her actions. God won't pay for our foolishness or our indifference.** )

2. **Read ... Rom. 2: 4-8**

3. It takes effort to become skilled at anything.
  - a. Athletes diet, exercise, study, train, etc. ... The good ones never stop developing.
  - b. One can set in a classroom for 17 years and come out ignorant **-IF-** he doesn't work.

**B. Likewise, the things that accompany spiritual maturity don't just happen.**

1. Peter instructs Christians to :
  - a. *be* ready to make a defense to everyone ... **I Pet. 3: 15**
  - b. to **grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. II Pet. 3: 18**
2. Paul commands the same thing :
  - a. **to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, Eph. 4:15b**
  - b. He continually prayed that Christians would be filled with knowledge and wisdom.
    - 1) **Col. 1: 9-** For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, **10** - so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;
    - 2) **Phil. 1: 9-** And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, **10** - so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; **11** - having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.
3. We all understand how this growth occurs :
  - a. **I Pet. 2: 1-** Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, **2-** like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, **3-** if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. ( **remove sin & add the word** )
  - b. **Jude 3** ... When Jude tells us to “**contend earnestly for the faith**” he is telling us to expend great effort toward developing the strength of our faith.

**C. Nothing and no one remains static ... all things are strengthening or weakening.**

1. Physical relationships mature and grow closer or slowly deteriorate. ( **They take work.** )
2. The spiritual realm is the same :
  - a. We are either growing closer to God or drifting.
  - b. **Gal. 5** ...The spirit is producing fruit in us or it is not. ( **hanging on the vine rotting** )
  - c. Am I more or less : loving, joyful, kind, good, faithful, gentle, self-controlled ?
3. Others can help, but you alone can make yourself grow. ( **personal responsibility** )

**D. Vs. 20 b - “Praying in the Holy Spirit”**

1. Not a mysterious or miraculous thing. ( **not pray in tongues** )
2. It is praying in accordance with the will of the Holy Spirit.
  - a. Not praying for a new car, or to win the lottery. ( **God chose not to make you rich.** )
  - b. **James 4: 3**
3. What does God want accomplished on the earth ? in this church ? in your life ?

**II. Vs. 22a ... Be merciful to those who doubt. ( 22-23 deals with 3 classes of people )****A. These are people who have not yet matured in the faith.**

1. **Rom 14 & I Cor 8** deal with the consideration Christians must have for the weak.
  - a. Mercy motivates us to forfeit our own rights in order to protect the weak.
  - b. Allowing them to rule is not protecting their weak faith. ... It is indulging sin.
2. Very often the weak think they are the strong ones.
  - a. The weak walk in fear of violation because they lack understanding.
  - b. This is the exact opposite of turning grace into license. ( **grace into law** )
3. We all have areas of strength and of weakness.
  - a. **Mark 9: 24-** ... “**I do believe; help my unbelief.**”
  - b. Love motivates us to be patient with each other. ( **love covers over a multitude ...** )

**B. Every Christian doubts at some time.**

1. “**I know you’re not supposed to question God, but ...**”
2. Of course we question God.
  - a. The bible is replete with of examples of people questioning God.
  - b. Abraham, Moses, David, others
3. When we sense weakness or doubt in a brother / sister, extend mercy.
  - a. Mercy does not condemn, criticize or gossip.
  - b. Mercy extends grace.

**C. There are those in the world who are filled with doubt, but are searching.**

1. Attacking them will run them away for ever. ( **beating them over the head with bible** )
2. This is the purpose of the example of Apollos. **Acts 18: 24-28** ( **took aside explain** )

3. This is what the Apostle Paul later codified :

**Col. 4: 5- Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. 6- Let your speech always be with grace, as *though* seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.**

\* **The objective is not to correct or to defeat, but to bring them to Christ**  
( No doctrine is important until one is made alive in Christ Jesus ... just the gospel. )

### III. Vs. 23 ... Save others, snatching them out of the fire.

#### A. What does it mean to snatch ?

1. Can't say exactly, but it does NOT mean :
  - a. To physically force them.
    - 1) Religious history ... Spanish inquisition, etc.
    - 2) Modern Muslim extremists
  - b. It doesn't mean to beat them over the head with the bible. ( **so turned off never obey** )
  - c. CANNOT mean just ignore them ... occasionally pray for them.
2. It requires that we be pro-active in reaching out to them to rescue.
  - a. Our actions ( *snatching* ) must result in their being rescued from eternal destruction.
  - b. We must do whatever is required to secure the necessary result ... **salvation**.
    - 1) Like the Apostle Paul, we must be willing to adjust to their situation. **I Cor 9: 22**
    - 2) Every situation is different.
  - c. When salvation is properly presented is it a beautiful and desirable thing.
 

\* **One mistake we make is to assume faith and go straight to presenting doctrine.**
3. This requires a sincere love for the lost.
  - a. Love is an action verb ... NOT an emotion.
  - b. His love put Jesus on the cross.
  - c. Our love will motivate us to overcome our fear and reach out to lost people.

#### B. What is the fire ?

1. The bible doesn't make it precisely clear whether it is literal fire or not.
  - a. The implication is obvious ... it is a situation of indescribable suffering.
  - b. Those not in Heaven will be in a place of endless pain with NO HOPE of escape.
2. A recent survey in Europe revealed that most people believe in Heaven, very few believed in Hell.
  - a. Satan is stilling telling the very same lie he told in the garden. **God will not punish.**
  - b. While on earth, Jesus taught more about Hell than He did about Heaven.

3. God does not want to punish, but His infinite justice demands that He does. **Ezek 18:23**
  - a. **This is a truth certain :** every person who has **not** put his faith in Jesus the Christ and obeyed the gospel from the heart will be separated from God eternally.
  - b. When a person dies, he will have NO further chances to be reconciled to God.
  - c. No matter what you call it ( fire, darkness, etc ) it is separation from God and from all God gives. ( **song ...I won't live in a world w/o love ... hell is just that** )

#### IV. Vs. 23b On some have mercy with fear.

##### A. These are obviously people living in sin.

1. We must love them and do our best to help them, but also fear them.
  - a. No one is above sin. ( **any sin ... remember our lesson on Peter's denial** )
  - b. The Apostle Paul warns us to be careful of ourselves while helping others.  
**Gal. 6: 1- Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.**
  - c. There are those who have totally destroyed their lives with sin. ( **drugs, etc** )
2. We must never lose sight of our own frailty ... **We all live in flesh.**

##### B. Hating the garment stained with sin.

1. God is totally repulsed by sin.
  - a. It is a malignant disease that eats away at the souls of men.
  - b. Though the disease be repulsive, God loves those infected by it.  
**\* My neighbor's wife had an infection in her leg. I couldn't even bear to look at it and neither could he. When he would change the dressing, he would have to leave the room and vomit, but he cleaned that leg twice every day and changed that dressing. He was compelled to minister to her because he loved her.**
  - c. This is exactly what Jesus did on the cross.
2. No matter how hard we try, we cannot help being affected by sin.
  - a. **No matter how careful I was, when printing, I always got ink on my clothes.**
  - b. **When around people who swear, the words creep into your thoughts.**

##### C. We must share God's disgust for sin, but also His love for those being destroyed by it.

1. We must reach out to those in need of salvation.

2. Reaching lost people requires that we have contact and interaction with them.
  - a. Jesus was scorned by the Jews for eating with sinners.
  - b. Likewise, we must go to where those who need God's mercy and mingle with them.
3. We must fear for our own souls while doing so. ( **There but by the grace of God go I.** )

### **CONCLUSION :**

- A. **If someone were to invite you to come out to a mountain top and watch God create a new planet ? Would you come ?**
  1. No one would refuse to see such a miracle.
  2. The soul of but one man is more valuable than a whole world.
- B. **If I were to invite you to come to the building on Tuesday evening to see God form a new man from the dust of the earth ? Would you come ? ( **We'd fill every seat.** )**
  1. When a person comes to Christ in obedient faith, he is "**created in Christ Jesus.**"
  2. **You** can lead people to become born again, to become new creatures, to be re-created.
- C. **Bro. Jude admonishes us to "**keep yourselves in the love of God.**" And explains that the process includes :**
  1. Showing mercy to those who are weak in faith and doubting.
  2. Snatching lost people out of the fire. ( **Rescuing from eternal destruction away from ..** )
  3. Being cautious not to be lead astray while rescuing the lost. ( **hate sin** )
- D. **The end result will be that we will stand before God :**
  1. We will stand before His glorious presence BLAMELESS.
  2. The coming of Christ will be a day of great joy for those "**in the love of God.**"

### **INVITATION :**

**Christ is able to keep us from stumbling so that our reunion will be an occasion of joy.**

**This is the way He has ordained that we conduct ourselves on our way to that day.**

**Are you in fellowship with Him ? Have you surrendered and obeyed ?**

**Have you continued walking in a life of mercy and rescuing the perishing ? COME**

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