

How to Survive the Last Days (Pt.2)

Jude 1:22-25

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INTRODUCTION

1. This morning we are looking once again at the epistle of Jude.
2. I would like to invite you to take God's Word and turn with me to Jude as we look at verses 22-25.
3. In our last study of this passage, we looked at verses 17-21 where we heard Jude call his readers to *remember the words of the apostles* and in regards to false teachers and to *build yourselves on your faith*.
4. This text not only addresses false teachers who have "crept in unnoticed" (v.4), but it also gives instruction to every believer as to how they are to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints" (v.3).
5. In our study Wednesday night we asked the question, "How are we to respond to false teachers?"
6. We said they must not go unchallenged in regards to their teaching.
7. This morning, I want to ask, "How are we to respond to those who have been deceived by false teachers?" because in verses 22-25, he gives instruction concerning those who have fallen prey to these false teachers.
8. As we look at this question this morning, let's begin reading at verse 17 so that we have the entire context in mind.

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8. Read Jude 1:17-25.
9. As I have stated on the last two occasions, false teachers are to be watched, challenged, and shunned.
10. They are not to be given a platform to propagate their heresy.
11. The apostle John said in 2 John 1:9-11, “Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; 11 for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.”
12. Cults “claim to have new light and teach doctrines that God has not revealed in His word. They do not stay within the bounds of the Christian revelation, or abide **in the doctrine of Christ**, probably meaning the teachings which **Christ** Himself brought. It could also mean all that the Bible teaches *about Christ*. The apostle emphasizes in verse 9 that a cultist may claim to know God, but if he does not believe in the absolute deity and humanity of the Lord Jesus, he **does not have God at all**” (William MacDonald, Believers’ Bible Commentary: Jude).
13. Jesus said to “beware” of them (Mat.7:15) while Paul urged the elders of the church at Ephesus to “be on the alert” (Acts 20:31).

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14. Just as “false prophets also arose among the people,...there will also be false teachers among you” (2 Pet.2:1) who will lead many astray by their teaching and by their conduct because they “oppose the truth” (2 Tim.3:8).
16. Titus 1:16 says, “They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.”
17. So as Jude set out to write this letter “to those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ” (v.1), he wanted to write to them “about our common salvation” but instead he felt it was more needful to write to them “appealing that [they] contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints” (v.3) because “certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ” (v.4).
18. Because of this urgency, Jude tells his readers two things for survival in the last days: *remember the words of the apostles* and *build yourselves on your faith*.
19. Verse 17 gives us the first imperative verb found in the book of Jude: “remember,” (mnesthete).
20. It means to “recall to memory” (Rienecker) the “words” (rematon) or “speech or writings” (Vine) of the apostles.

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21. What were the words that Jude wanted his readers to remember?
22. That there would be mockers in the last time (v.18).
23. They would be able to identify them by their deception— They are called “mockers,” and by their arrival.
24. These mockers “make a mock at sin, make light of it, plead for it, openly commit it, and glory in it; and scoff at all religion” (John Gill, John’s Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible).
25. 2 Peter 3:4 says they scoff at God’s judgement willfully forgetting that God destroyed all mockers with a worldwide flood.
26. Jude says their arrival will be “in the last time.”
27. We have been in the last time or last days since Jesus was here on earth but the last of the last days will be extremely “difficult” or “dangerous” as Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:1.
28. Not only did the apostles say that there would be mockers in the last time but they would also be characterized in four ways: by their ungodly desires (v.18), their destructive activities (v.19), their sensual character (v.19), and their lack of spiritual life (v.19).
29. Their character is marked by “godlessness, wickedness, and profane desires” (v.18).

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30. Because their desires are “ungodly” they’re activities are destructive (v.19). They “cause divisions.”
31. If there is anything that God hates is “division.”
32. Proverbs 6:19 says that God hates “one who spreads strife among brothers.”
33. Rather than uniting the church, they fracture it.
34. Ungodly desires, divisions, and also sensual character (v.19).
35. Verse 19 says they are “worldly minded.”
36. As Adam Clarke says, they are “living as brute beasts guided simply by their own lusts and passions.”
37. Jude ends by stating they lack spiritual life in verse 19—they are “devoid of the Spirit.”
39. This means they are unregenerate because anyone who “does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him” (Rom.8:9).
40. Maxwell Coder says, “If there were any remaining question about whether an apostate is a lost soul, or simply a Christian who is mistaken in some of his ideas, this certainly settles it. An apostate does not have the Holy Spirit. He is an unregenerate man. He lacks the distinguishing mark of the true believer, the Spirit who seals the transaction which takes place

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between an individual and his God in the moment of believing, seals it until the day of redemption (Eph.1:13-14)” (The Acts of the Apostles, 107).

41. Now in verses 20-25 Jude turns his attention to the saints and calls for them to *build yourselves on your faith*.
42. How do you do that?
43. You do that by *praying in the Holy Spirit* and by *keeping yourselves in the love of God*.
44. Praying in the Spirit means to pray constantly in the will and power of the Holy Spirit not speak some gibberish.
45. Ephesians 6:18 says, “With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints.”
46. Every aspect of our life is to be under the control of the Holy Spirit—our words and our deeds.
47. Our speech is to be seasoned with grace (Col.4:6) and our walk is to be “by the Spirit” (Gal.5:16).
48. To keep yourselves in the love of God means to “guard” or “watch over” yourself so as to remain in that place or location in the love of God where God’s blessing resides.
49. In other words, be obedient to God.

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50. As we said last time, this is the main verb in this section.
51. Building and praying are participles that modify the verb “keep.”
52. To keep yourselves in the love of God is done by building yourself up on the truth and by praying in the Holy Spirit.
53. As you do this you constantly *look for the return of Jesus* (v.21b).
54. You’re “waiting anxiously” (MacArthur) for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.
55. This is an intense looking.
56. It is as Titus 2:13 says, “Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.”
57. “Jude says we should live in eager expectation of Christ’s return. Waiting not for the judgment of the earth but for Jesus Himself, we are thus filled with hope. This expectant waiting helps to keep us in the love of God, the place of blessing, by purifying us” (John MacArthur, 92).
58. “And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies Himself, just as He is pure” the apostle John said in 1 John 3:3.

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59. Now in verses 22-23 he gives us two more responsibilities in building ourselves on our faith.

60. First he says in verse 22 to *have mercy on others*.

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I. Remember the Words of the Apostles (vv.17-19)

II. Build Yourself on Your Faith (vv.20-25)

- A. Pray in the Holy Spirit (v.20)
- B. Keep Yourself in the Love of God (v.21a)
- C. Look for the Return of Jesus (v.21b)
- D. Have Mercy On Others (vv.22-23)

“A certain measure of spiritual discernment is necessary in dealing with victims of apostasy. The Scriptures make a distinction between the way we should handle those who are active propagandists of false cults and those who have been duped by them.” (William MacDonald, Believer’s Bible Commentary: Jude).

Jude says while your “waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life” (v.21), “have mercy on some” (v.22).

The word “mercy” appears in both the NASB and ESV while the word “compassion” is used in the KJV and NKJV.

This word (eleeo, pres.act.imp.) means both mercy and compassion because mercy is compassion.

It could be translated “to show pity, be merciful” (Rienecker) or “show compassion,” “be kind” or “having a loving heart toward” (Daniel C. Arichea and Howard Hatton, A Handbook on the Letter from Jude and the

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Second Letter from Peter, UBS handbook series; Helps for translators, 55).

“We are recipients of great mercy. It is multiplied to us now (Jude 2); we look for an abundant manifestation of it in the future, at the return of our Savior (v.21). It is only fitting, therefore, that we should be merciful to others” (Ibid., Coder, p.114).

Jesus said in Matthew 5:7, “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.”

1. Those who doubt (v.22)

The word “doubting” (diakrino, pres.mid.part.) May have the meaning “to doubt, to waiver” and the meaning might be “to show pity on the wavering” (Rienecker).

“These are the Christians who begin to have doubts about the truth of the Christian faith and of particular Christian doctrines because of the influence of those who are giving false teaching. Perhaps we can say ‘those who are uncertain about what they believe’” (Arichea).

This is why it is dangerous to listen to false teaching. It can and will cause you to doubt what you believe.

This is the tactic the Jehovah’s Witnesses use when

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they come to your door. If they can get you to doubt then they got you.

- a) James 5:19-20 says, “My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.”

Here James is not stating that those mentioned in these two verses are true believers when he uses the term “brethren.” He is stating that they are among the brethren. He says, “My brethren, if any man among you.”

They have attached themselves to the faith but now are abandoning that loyalty. That’s what apostasy is. It is “an abandonment of a former loyalty” (Webster).

- b) The apostle John describes it in 1 John 2:19 when he says, “They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.”
- c) Paul describes them as those who “turn their ears away from the truth” (2 Tim.4:3) or those who “depart from the faith” (1 Tim.4:1).

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- d) James continues in 5:19 by stating that they have strayed from the truth.

The word “strays” is the Greek word *planao*, it means, “to cause to stray,” to “lead astray.” It is “abandoning what is true and committing oneself to error” (ANLEX). It is to “apostatize” (MacArthur).

It is used in both the LXX and NT to describe physical wandering (Gen.37:15; Mat.18:12-13) but it is often used in the LXX and NT of “straying from spiritual truth” (MacArthur).

It is translated in the NT as “deceived” (Jas.1:16); “goes astray” (Mat.18:12); “straying” (Mat.18:12); “mistaken” (Mat.22:29).

This word “frequently describes the condition of the unsaved” (MacArthur)

- (1) In Matthew 22:29 Jesus said to the Sadducees who tried to trap Him, “You are *mistaken* [from *planao*] not understanding the Scriptures nor the power of God.”
- (2) In Titus 3:3, Paul described our former condition as being “once foolish, disobedient, *deceived* [from *planao*], serving various lusts and pleasures, living

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in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.”

- (3) Peter noted in 1 Peter 2:25 that we were “continually *straying* [from planao] like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.”

So we could say that this word “suggests one who has missed his path and is hopelessly lost” (Bible Knowledge Commentary)

If you note their actions alone that reveals their identity—the pattern of our life *always* reveals who we are. This person’s actions revealed him to be a “sinner” (v.20).

James used this term “sinner” earlier in chapter 4 when he called those who were causing quarrels and strife to “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.” (vv.7-8).

James also tells us that the issue is the saving of “his soul from death.”

Death here is not a reference to the grave but to hell.

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Believer's do not fear death because the second death has no power over them. They have been delivered from death or hell (Rom.8:1).

Their apostasy is the abandonment of "the truth"

"The truth refers to the Word of God, primarily the gospel of salvation (cf.1:18; 3:14)"
(MacArthur).

When Jude says in verse 22, "And have mercy on some, who are doubting," he is referring to those who are giving the first sign of apostatizing.

"We should show a compassionate interest in them and try to guide them out of doubts and disputations into a firm conviction of divine truth" (William MacDonald, Believer's Bible Commentary: Jude).

2. Those who are endangered disbelievers (v.23)

"Save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh."

"Save" Gr.solete (pres.act.imp.), "to rescue"
(Rienecker)

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“Pulling” or “snatching” Gr.aprolontes
(pres.act.part.), “to seize, snatch” (Rienecker)

“Out of the fire” may have reference to the example of Lot being pulled out of Sodom and Gomorrah prior to its destruction.

“Jude says these people are close to hellfire, and we must go after them with a sense of urgency. We must warn them of their great peril and try to get them away from the false teaching which will destroy them” (Ibid., MacArthur, p.93).

John MacArthur says, “The heretical and deceptive statements made by false teachers, along with their licentious lifestyles, can easily confuse some people within the church. In fact, that was exactly what happened at both Corinth (2 Cor. 11:3) and Galatia (Gal. 3:1–5; cf. 1:6–9). And it still happens today. Caught in the web of deception, some find themselves thoroughly confused—unsure of what is true and what isn’t. In reaching out to such people, Jude called the church to **have mercy on** them, showing kindness, compassion, and sympathy to those who **are doubting**.”

Like wolves stalking sheep, false teachers prey on weak people (cf. 2 Tim. 3:6), individuals who are vacillating, unsure, and mired in doubt (James 1:6–8; cf. Pss. 73:13–16; 77:7–9). Those who are strong

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must show mercy to such souls as they are torn between truth and error (cf. Eph. 4:14), commitment and noncommitment (Heb. 3:7–4:13; 6:1–12). Showing mercy does not mean ignoring the seriousness of false teaching or commending the weak for their vacillation. But it does mean exhorting such people with the truth, in meekness and patience, being diligent to present the gospel to them before they are permanently caught in heresy” (2 Peter and Jude).

3. Confirmed sinners (v.23)

“And on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.”

“This the most dangerous. Jude says we are to ‘have mercy with fear.’ This fear is associated with flight or running away, and means that we must be aware of the danger of temptation which may come to us.

This third group is made up of people who are already firmly entrenched in an evil system and have become propagators of it. It includes the apostate false teachers themselves. Christians must love these people while hating their wicked lifestyle and teaching.

Jude says we should even hate their garments which

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are polluted by sin” (Ibid., MacArthur, p.94).

“Garment” Gr.chitona, “undergarment - the garment which was worn next to the body” (Rienecker).

“Polluted” Gr.espilomenon, “to stain, defile, contaminate” (Rienecker).

E. Rest in the Keeping Power of God (vv.24-25)

“If Christians are to risk defilement and to live dangerously by trying to rescue people out of the very clutches of Satan himself, they might again be tempted to become fearful. They could fear that they would fall into sin or error or even into hell itself. Some Christians might wrongly worry that they might fall prey to apostasy or false teaching and lose their salvation.

After urging us to reach out to those in danger of hell, Jude reminds us again that there is no need for a committed Christian to fear. In fact, we can even *rest*, knowing that God is the One who keeps us safe” (Ibid., MacArthur, p.95).

William MacDonald says in verse 24 that “Jude closes with a beautiful benediction. It is the ascription of praise and worship to Him who is able. He is able to save (Heb. 7:25), able to establish (Rom. 16:25), able to aid (Heb. 2:18), able to subdue (Phil. 3:21)-and here He is able to

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keep. He is able to keep us in perfect peace (Isa. 26:3), He is able to keep that which we have committed to Him until that Day (2 Tim. 1:12), He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think (Eph. 3:20), and He is able to keep us from stumbling” (Believer’s Bible Commentary).

1. God is able to *keep* you (v.24)

“Keep” Gr. Phulasso, “to watch, guard” (Strong). This refers to “watch-care in case of attack” (MacArthur).

Even if we come under attack, God is able to “keep us from stumbling” or falling into apostasy.

Not only is He able to keep you but...

2. God is able to *make you stand* in the presence of His glory *blameless* with great joy (v.24)

To make you stand translates the verb histemi, which more precisely in this context means "to set," "to present," "to confirm," or "to establish."

At present, believers stand in grace (Rom. 5:1-4), but in the future they will also stand in glory (Col. 3:4; 1 Peter 5:10) [The MacArthur Study Bible].

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William MacDonald says, “When we think of what we were-dead through our trespasses and sins; when we think of what we are-poor, weak, failing servants; and then to think that one day we will stand absolutely faultless in the Throne Room of the universe, rejoicing with exceeding joy-what grace is this!” (Believer’s Bible Commentary).

3. God’s praise is to be exclusive (v.25)

“To the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.”

CONCLUSION

1. Are you listening to the words of the apostles?
2. They are the words of the New Testament.
3. Are you building yourself up on your most holy faith?
4. Are you keeping yourself in the love of God?
5. These are the means for survival in the last days.
6. Of course, if you are without Jesus Christ this morning, then you are not ready to meet Him nor will you survive what is yet

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to come.

7. I urge you right now to repent from your sin and turn to Jesus Christ who alone can save you.
8. God's wrath is coming and His mercy will soon end.
9. Repent now while there is time.
10. Let's pray.