



World Christian Fellowship

www.wcflondon.com
wcflondon@gmail.com

Jude 13

How to fight for your faith? Holy Faith

Jude 1:17-23, *But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: ¹⁸how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. ¹⁹These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit. ²⁰But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. ²²And on some have compassion, making a distinction; ²³but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.*

V 20, *“But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith.”*

At the very heart of this matter of survival and triumph in a day of apostasy is being strong in the most holy faith.

It's not talking about subjective faith, that is your believing.

It's talking about objective faith, that is the content of the gospel.

You be strong in your understanding of Christian truth.

Remember this very same warning and instruction is given throughout the New Testament.

No book of the New Testament, for that matter, no book of the Bible exists in isolation. Since they have one author, it is absolutely inspired, inerrant and consistent, and therefore it explains itself.

The best explainer of the Bible is the Bible itself.

2 Corinthians 11:1-3, *Oh, that you would bear with me in a little folly—and indeed you do bear with me. ²For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. ³But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

Simplicity and purity of Christ.

So, Paul's concern is that having begun with a ground that is solid in the truth, people begin to wander away.

Been led astray in their minds by the enemy and his deceivers.

2 Corinthians 11:4, *For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!*

You seem too tolerant.

I wish that you were more intolerant of error.

When somebody comes with another Jesus or another spirit or another gospel, you seem to bear it.

This worries me, because this is exactly how people are led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. Because I desire to present you to Christ as a pure virgin, without having committed adultery, bought in to some other gospel, some other Jesus, some other spirit, spiritual adultery,

Now that is why we do this.

That is why the Bible is so explicit about discernment.

It is to protect.

It is no different than your physical children.

We warn them about all kinds of things will be a danger to them.

We warn them about where they go, what they see, eat, and with whom they associate.

Because we have brought them into the world. We understand the nature of their souls and the tendency to drift.

This is no different in the spiritual children.

This is a pastor's heart.

1 Thessalonians 5:20-22, *Do not despise prophecies. ²¹Test all things; hold fast what is good. ²²Abstain from every form of evil.*

Those texts provide for us a broader base than just Jude.

We are warned here to be discerning. Jude tells us if we are going to be protected in a time of apostasy from the subtleties of the deceivers that are all around us, we are going to have to be building ourselves up in the most holy faith.

Essentially both Jude and Paul are saying the something.

We must guard ourselves against deception.

We must examine everything carefully.

We cannot be gullible.

We cannot accept everything.

We cannot take everything in.

When the church loses its will to discern, no longer cared about sorting truth from error, sorting out lies and deception.

Today the idea of tolerance has gone too far.

We must accept everybody no matter what they believed. Nobody was going to be able to sit in judgment on anybody's belief or anybody's faith. Everybody had a right to his own convictions, et cetera.

What Paul was fearful would happen, that people would depart from the simplicity and the purity of devotion to Christ, because they would be led astray by the craftiness of Satan, even as Eve was, into another Jesus and another spirit and another message.

The church has abandoned its interest in discernment and therefore abandoned its interest in any book that calls it not to abandon its interest and discernment.

Acts 20:29-31, *For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.³⁰ Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.³¹ Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.*

We started this book for the last December 4 weeks, but we have been preaching for over 4 months.

Matthew 16, our Lord indicted the leaders of Israel for the utter absence of their ability to discern. The Pharisees, the Sadducees came up, and they were testing Him as always, asking Him to show them a sign from heaven.

Matthew 16:2-3, *He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red';³ and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times.*

They had their little primitive ways of telling what was coming weather-wise.

A certain kind of sky indicated fair weather.

A certain kind of sky at another time of day indicated threatening weather.

As primitive as your weather forecasting is, it's better than your theology.

I don't know if you could come up with a more demeaning statement to the self-appointed theologians of Judaism than to say they were better weathermen than they were theologians.

Because obviously their ability to tell the weather was extremely primitive. But they were better at that than their theology.

The church is rapidly better at discerning the physical world than it is the spiritual.

The church today is becoming better at discerning what's going on in the culture than it is the truth of God.

So, they are limited, and lack discernment.

John Eldridge who has written several books, who by his own admission, stopped going to church years ago. He had a great spiritual experience by not going to church. Now his church is to gather together with a small group of his own friends.

If you follow his ecclesiology very far, there are many others who are saying similar things that he is saying: "We have got to get away from the traditional church which is dominated by preaching."

Lack of discernment. If you aren't sitting under somebody who can interpret the Scripture for you, you are not going to be able to discern.

What's going on today?

Preaching is being replaced by entertainment, music dominates, etc.

Pastors are giving their insights and psychological messages.

But on the other hand, “Expose yourself to preaching but examine everything, test everything to determine its genuineness.

It’s like the noble Bereans who searched the Scripture to see if things were so.

Why has this discernment disappeared?

Why is there such a lack of discernment?

Weakening of doctrinal clarity and conviction.

A cheap gospel, as it’s called, easy-believism, tolerance, unity, openness.

There is a negative attitude toward being narrowed, toward being doctrinal.

The church has been invaded with liberalism, psychology, charismatics, politicism.

Whenever error wants to find a place in the church, it must find a way to get rid of dogmatism. The only way that error can

be accepted in the church is if people are no longer going to hold a doctrinal standard.

These forces that are outside the Bible demand acceptance, demand a place in the church, and so they push dogmatism aside.

The emphasis in the church then goes from preaching doctrine to the mind for the purpose of people giving greater glory to God through His Word, to inducing pleasant emotion, pleasant feeling, good feeling, fun, personal comfort, et cetera.

Worship descends from singing truths about God, lyric-centred music full of theology, which is dominated by volume, rhythm, harmony, to induce warm, fuzzy, and sensual moods.

We have a weakening of doctrinal clarity and conviction. People don't know what doctrines.

If you look back at Scripture,
The garden of Eden had **two trees**: one allowed and one forbidden.

Destiny, two places to go: one heaven, one hell.

Only two ways: God's way and everybody else's way. People are either saved or lost.

They either belong to **God's people** or the world.

They either come into **salvation through Christ** or they do not. There is **Mount Gerizim**, the mount of blessing, Ebal, the mount of cursing.

Two ways: the narrow way and the broad way.

- Light or darkness,
- Kingdom of God, or kingdom of Satan,
- Love or hate,
- Spiritual wisdom or the wisdom of the world

The Bible is always very black and white.

Even in the Old Testament the Israelites were taught clean and unclean distinctions.

James 4:4, *“You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”*

Failure to properly interpret the Scripture.

2 Timothy 2:15, *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

A superficial understanding of Scripture, a weak grasp of sound doctrine, a deficient view of God is the manifestation of spiritual immaturity. Discernment belongs to the mature; that's Hebrews 5. The actual application of this is to unbelievers, but certainly the principle is the same.

Hebrews 5:12-14, *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ¹³For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. ¹⁴But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

It's the mature who have discernment.

Remember.

V 17-19,

When you see apostasy around you, don't be surprised as if something has happened to upset God's plan.

As if God has been dethroned,
As if things aren't working out the way God intended them to,
But this was predicted.

The Scripture predicts this, because apart from a prediction, very hard to understand.

It would almost seem like all the efforts of God and Christ, all the efforts of the Holy Spirit in the founding of the church had gone awry and gone awry very early as the church began to disintegrate in the first century. By the end of the century, you have those seven letters to the churches in the book of **Revelation. Chapters 2 and 3**, five of the churches have already defected from the truth from one degree or another.

It is inevitable, because whatever it is that God designs to do with His truth, Satan is going to design to attack with his lies and deception. Satan is going to have the measure of success which God permits him to have. So we are not surprised that these people, these false leaders, come and mock the truth, following their ungodly lusts.

They separate themselves as if they are higher than everybody else. Truthfully, they are sensual rather than spiritual, and devoid of the Holy Spirit. They are just like those Pharisees we saw about this morning who have no change on the inside.

To remain in the disciplines of sanctification. To protect yourself from being led astray, to sustain yourself in the process of sanctification, to maintain your usefulness, there are some basic disciplines to be pursued.

V 20, “But you, beloved,”

V 17, “But you, beloved,”

You become doctrinally strong.

Building yourselves up on your most holy faith.

This verb, building yourself up,” refers to a metaphorical building, obviously, to “spiritual development,” “spiritual progress,” “spiritual growth.”

It calls the church back to the priority of sound doctrine.

Most holy faith is objective but can't be subjective.

It can't be your personal faith because your personal faith isn't most holy.

The truth is the most holy faith. That is to say that truth which comes from God. It is His holy truth.

We are called to building ourselves up on the foundation of our most holy faith.

Comes down to studying the Word of God and studying it with a view toward obedience.

Learning and applying the Word of God.

Acts 20:32, *“So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*

1 Peter 2:1-3, *Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking,²as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*

If you are a student of Scriptures to edification through the study of the Word of God and its faithful application.

There are people who study it and don't apply it and then it becomes a hardening agent.

1 Corinthians 14:26, *How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification*

- You teach for edification.
- You give a revelation from God for edification.
- You interpret a language for edification.
- You have a psalm or a song for edification.
- Everything the church does is designed for building up.

Ephesians 4:11-12, *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ*

What do apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor/teachers do?

They teach and preach the Word of God, which builds you up.

There is no other agency, no other means to do that. That is the tool that God has given us for our own spiritual development.

Colossians 2:6-7, *As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,⁷ rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.*

The bottom line in all spiritual development is to study and apply the word.

1 John 2:12-14, *I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.¹³ I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father.¹⁴ I have written to you, fathers,*

Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one.

There are three stages of spiritual development:

1. Little children,
 2. Young men, and
 3. Fathers.
- Little children know God about the extent of what they know not much.
 - Young men are strong, the Word of God abides in them, and they have overcome the evil one, because the evil one is primarily a deceiver.
 - Spiritual fathers then go beyond just knowing the Word, and they begin to know God in an intimate way, because of their exposure to Him through His Word.

So, there are three levels of spiritual growth, and it all depends upon the learning and applying of the Word of God.

2 Timothy 3:16-17, *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

You can't get through the sanctification process without Scripture.

We are not talking about giving people your ideas, telling stories, and punctuating them with Bible verses.

The New Testament calls us repeatedly to this discipline of the study of the Word of God, and understanding and grasping its deep and profound truths, so that they may be applied to our lives.

So, the first thing that is necessary if you want to remain in the progress of sanctification during apostasy is to be building yourself up in your most holy faith.

You are being edified by the Word of God through the preaching and the teaching and the resources that are provided by your church and in every other area, and by the community of God's people, the body of Christ, as well as your own personal study and the work of the Spirit in the Word when you learn it yourself.

1. Praying in the Holy Spirit.

While I am learning, it doesn't replace my dependence on God. Dependence is always on God.

What does it mean "praying in the Holy Spirit"?

There are some people who would jump on this and say it means speaking in tongues.

It doesn't mean that at all. It doesn't have anything to do with that.

It simply means to pray consistent with the Spirit's will. To pray yielded to the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:26, *Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*

What does that mean?

I don't know what God wants.

I know He wants righteousness and not sin.

I know He wants to be honoured and not dishonoured,

But when it comes to the issues of life, I don't know how God wants me to go.

I don't know what His purpose is in some areas.

I don't know what His will about this matter or that matter is.

We don't know how to pray as we should because we don't know the future.

We can't interpret the issues of life.

We don't know how to pray as we should.

But the Holy Spirit intercedes for us.

The Holy Spirit groans within us.

The Holy Spirit, as it were, expresses a certain pain, a certain agony, a certain concern, a certain compassion, a certain sympathy toward God on our behalf.

This doesn't say we speak words. It says the Spirit speaks!

But He doesn't speak words, He speaks in groanings too deep for words.

This is the Spirit of God passionately interceding for us before God the Father with groanings that the Father understands, and there are no words required.

Romans 8:27, *Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.*

The Spirit's praying for you all the time.

We have an advocate in heaven, Jesus Christ our High Priest, who intercedes for us in heaven.

We have also an Advocate and an Intercessor living in us; your body's the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Your whole lifelong as a Christian, the Spirit of God intercedes before God on your behalf!

The Spirit does so with compassion, sympathy, empathy, and concern for you. Holy Spirit goes to the throne of God in inter-Trinitarian communication that has no words.

But the Father perfectly understands the mind of the Spirit because they are one. The Father knows that the Spirit intercedes according to His will.

So, the Holy Spirit is before God all the time in perfect harmony with God's will.

Romans 8:28, *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*

What does it mean the Holy Spirit is praying?

If you're praying in the Spirit, then you are praying consistently with the will of God.

What does "pray in Jesus' name" mean?

It doesn't mean tack Jesus' name on the end, and that just sort of sanctifies everything and gets you whatever you ask for.

Praying in Jesus' name means praying consistent with His will.

John 14:15, *If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.*

Praying in the Spirit is simply lining up with the will of God.

- On the one hand I am imbibing the Word of God.
- On the other hand, my whole life is just laid before God with this overarching prayer "Lord, do what You will. Do what pleases You."

I want my prayers to be consistent with the Holy Spirit's prayers. Praying in the Spirit, praying yielded to the Holy Spirit, praying that the will of the Father and the will of the Spirit and the will of the Son be done, praying consistently with God's will.

There is then a surrendering to the Spirit of God. It's as if we rest on His will and His power.

- We are called to this discipline of study
- We are called to this discipline of submission.

2. Keep yourselves in the love of God.

“Keep yourselves in the love of God”

Keep yourself in the place where you experience the blessing that God’s love brings. Don’t get on the bad side of God is!

You understand that as a parent, you know what it is for your children to keep themselves in the place where they enjoy the fullness of your love. It means don’t get yourself in a position where you are going to feel His wrath, His chastening, His punishment.

John 15:9-10, *“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.*

Keep yourself obedient.

When you remain obedient, you will enjoy all the fullness of God’s love.

As long as I live in obedience, I will enjoy the full shower of God’s love and blessing.

As soon as I become disobedient, I step out of that place of blessing into the place of discipline.

Hebrews 12:5-10, *And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; ⁶For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." ⁷If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? ⁸But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. ⁹Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. ¹¹Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

I would rather be in the place of blessing than the place of discipline, wouldn't you?

Do you want to survive, grow up in your understanding of the Word?

Submit yourself to the will of God.

Praying in the Holy Spirit, as it were, submitting to whatever it is that the Spirit of God wants to do and to His leadership and

direction in your life, which, of course, always connects perfectly with the Word.

Stay in the place of obedience.

3. Wait anxiously for Christ to come.

V 21, *keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*

- ✓ Live in the light of the return of Christ,
- ✓ Live in the light of eternity,
- ✓ Live in the light of the future,
- ✓ Live in eager anticipation of the Lord's return.

Wait anxiously for Christ to come.

Set your affections on that.

1 Thessalonians 1:10, *and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.*

This is a hope that purifies your life when you know He's coming and you are eager to see Him, and to give an account for your life.

Titus 2:13, *“Looking for the blessed hope in the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Christ Jesus.”*

When we do that, it instructs us to deny ungodliness, worldly desires. To live sensibly, righteously, and godly in this present age.

Live in the light of Christ’s return, and your rewards.

When you see Him face to face you must hear Him saying to you, “Well done.”

- We are called then to this discipline, a discipline of building ourselves up in the most holy faith.
- Praying in the Holy Spirit, that is always and ever our prayers rise submitted to the will of the Spirit.
- Keeping ourselves in the love of God, that is staying in the place of obedience to His commandments.
- Waiting expectantly and eagerly and always ready for that final mercy of all mercies, the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that brings us eternal life.

Ephesians 2:4, *But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,*

Lamentations 3:22-23, Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. ²³They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

But Jude isn't thinking of a past mercy or a present mercy, he is thinking of the greatest mercy of all, the most undeserved mercy That is eternal life in all its fullness.

That is the mercy of all mercies.

You don't deserve to go to heaven but His mercy we are going there.

1 Timothy 3:16, *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.*

1 Timothy 1:17, *Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honour and glory forever and ever. Amen.*

Bursts into a doxology when he thinks about that final and eternal mercy.

It is mercy that you are forgiven and justified.

It is mercy that you are being sanctified.

But the ultimate mercy is His mercy to glorify you.

Psalm 138:8, *The Lord will perfect that which concerns me; Your mercy, O Lord, endures forever; Do not forsake the works of Your hands.*

Our glorification is the final mercy.

We live our whole lives, as it were, an island in a sea of apostasy, strengthened, secure, protected, useful, because we are built up in the faith, praying in the Spirit, obedient to God, and therefore in the circle where His love pours out blessing upon blessing.

We live in the light of His return and our eternal life, the final mercy. These are the core disciplines of Christian living: Bible study, prayer, obedience, and hope. To this we are called in this world.