

Apr 25, 2010



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

BUILDING UP THE FAITH

Jude 1:17-25

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Maintaining Steadfast Faith A Study of Jude

Date	Lesson	Text
04/11	Contending for the Faith	1:3
04/18	Corruptors of the Faith	1:4-16
04/25	Building up the Faith	1:17-25

Next Series

What is the Purpose of Life
A Study of Ecclesiastes

Food for Thought

God-Centered Faith

My faith has found a resting place
Not in device nor creed:
I trust the Ever-living One
His wounds for me shall plead.
Our faith may not be great
but our God is.

"Have faith in God," Jesus answered.
Mark 11:22 (NIV)

(From "Our Daily Bread" Jan 12, 1999)

Maintaining faith in a faithless world is never easy. It becomes even more difficult when that faithless world enters into the church and masquerades as the true faith. Then Christians must take a stand. Some of us are quiet and peaceable by nature. Others of us have cultivated such a spirit by the grace of God. Here, though, the apostle exhorts even us to "contend for the faith." We might prefer to sit quietly and let others do the contending. After all, we reason, God is perfectly able to take care of the purity of the gospel without us soiling our hands with that unpleasant task. Yes, God could, but He has entrusted the task to us all of us. **Someone has said, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." That is true even within the church!** Evil will make of the church something God never intended it to be. It will weaken the truth, twist it, and turn it into evil. The gospel worth contending for is that which "was once delivered unto the saints" (vs. 3). It was delivered by Jesus and the apostles. We must preserve it without addition or subtraction. What kind of people would do such a thing? Jude tells us that they may be the people in the next pew. They may be the people on important committees and in leadership positions in the church. They came into the church under false pretenses. Now they have the form and testimony of a believer, but they teach and live another gospel. From their position within the church, they seek to destroy it, all the time professing to love God and have the church's welfare in mind. Look at how Jude describes such people. No wonder he exhorted believers to contend for the faith! It is never enough to be against something. It is never enough to be contending for what you believe. Something else is infinitely more important, and that is to build on the faith you already have. That is just what Jude urges us to do. Look at **the verbs Jude associates with that building process: "praying" (vs. 20), "keep looking" (vs. 21), "have compassion" (vs. 22), and "pulling" (vs. 23).** Prayer is the lifeline of the believer, it is that which ties him to God, the source of all strength. Without prayer he can do nothing. With prayer he can do all things. The believer must keep himself in the love of God. God will do His part, of course; that goes without saying. The believer also has a part to do. Let him faithfully do his part as God faithfully does His. The believer is always looking to God and looking to the future. This world and this moment are not all there is. There is a future, both in this life and in the life to come. The believer looks to God for the fulfillment of both. The believer is also concerned about the spiritual welfare of those around him. He ministers to some by his compassion, he reaches out to others in more active ways. Let us pray for God's grace, that we might have the strength and wisdom to build on our faith with good works of compassion and service.

(Excerpt from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator)

We need to remember that Jude advises us first to strengthen ourselves and our own faith, then to help others do the same for themselves and their faith. This calls for a word of caution. No doubt enemies of the faith have infiltrated churches of our time as they did churches of the first century. If we set ourselves to find them and expose them, we face a triple danger to ourselves. First, we may make false accusations, for fellow believers who need to strengthen their faith may be at heart as loyal as we are. Second, we may become as divisive as the enemies are (v. 19). Third, we may become too critical, too judgmental, too disagreeable in lacking discernment between issues of doctrine and opinion. For those who need help in strengthening themselves in our most holy faith, **Jude advises us to be helpers, not detectives and prosecutors.**

(Excerpt from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Build through remembering God's Word

Remembering God Word spoken in the past through prophets and apostles (2 Peter 3:2)

2 I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.

Remembering God Word and not forsaking it (Rev 2:4-5)

4 Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. 5 Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first.

Remembering God Word because it is righteous (Ps 119:61-62)

61 Though the wicked bind me with ropes, I will not forget your law. 62 At midnight I rise to give you thanks for your righteous laws.

Remembering God Word because it will prolong life (Prov 3:1-2)

My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, 2 for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity.

Remembering God Word to gain wisdom and understanding (Prov 4:5)

5 Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or swerve from them.

Build through praying in the Holy Spirit

Praying in the Holy Spirit helps in our weakness (Rom 8:26-27)

26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

Praying in the Holy Spirit and with our mind (1 Cor 14:15)

15 So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind.

Praying in the Holy Spirit because we are a child of God (Gal 4:6-7)

6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

Praying in the Holy Spirit with all kinds of prayers and requests (Eph 6:18)

18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Build through remaining in the love of God

Remaining in the love of God because nothing can separate it from us (Rom 8:37-39)

38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Remaining in the love of God to persevere (2 Thess 3:5)

5 May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.

Remaining in the love of God through obedience (John 15:9-10)

9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

Remaining in the love of God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1 John 4:15-18)

15 If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. 16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. 17 In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. 18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

Build through compassion and helping deceived saints

Help for deceived saints by promoting godly sorrow and repentance (2 Cor 7:10-11)

10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. 11 See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.

Help for deceived saints through restoration (Gal 6:1-2)

6:1 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. 2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

Help for deceived saints through practicing disassociation to cause return (2 Thess 3:14-15)

14 If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. 15 Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

Help for deceived saints through living in peace with holiness (Heb 12:14-15)

14 Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. 15 See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

Help for deceived saints through trying to win them back (James 5:19-20)

19 My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, 20 remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.