

Building Up Yourself

“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”

Jude 1:20-21

Introduction:

1. The epistle of Jude describes the dangers and errors of wicked men who creep into the churches.
2. In the face of compromise by most Christians around us, we must stand fast by these specific rules.
3. Charismatics prefer Dr. Seuss (<http://www.lifeyes.com/posts/joe/2007/04/unborn-its-whats-gods-heart>).
4. After exhorting to earnest contention (1:3), Jude described the wicked until stating these simple rules.
5. Though we cannot do anything without Him (John 15:5), the duties in this place are on our shoulders.
6. Here is true Christianity defined for us against the counterfeit form of compromisers and the wicked.
7. The careful practice of these four duties will protect churches and saints from false Christianity.
8. The current state of Christianity did not occur overnight – it came by an inch-at-a-time-compromise.
9. God is able to keep us from falling, but we are to apply ourselves diligently (1:24; I Thess 5:23-24).
10. If we meet terms allowing multiple applications, we shall consider them all, as by inspired ambiguity.

But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith,

- A. Jude's *but* defines the sharp contrast between wicked professors and the righteous (1:19-20).
 1. Rebukes *separate themselves* from true churches and doctrine (I Jn 2:19; II Tim 4:3-4).
 2. They are *sensual*, belly worshippers minding earthly things (Ro 16:17-18; Phil 3:18-19).
 3. They *have not the Spirit*, even though they may make a fuss about a spirit (II Cor 11:3-4).
 4. Getting slain or drunk in the spirit, or laughing or barking in the spirit, is not God's Spirit.
 5. These three traits are a horrible indictment of false Christianity; we must abhor all three.
 6. The true worshippers of God do not leave the grounded and settled faith of the gospel (Col 1:23), are spiritually minded (Rom 8:5), and bear the Spirit's fruit (Gal 5:22-25).
- B. His *beloved* takes us to the beginning, where he exhorts to defending the truth (1:3,17,20).
- C. What is *your most holy faith*? The grace of faith given in regeneration is to be built upon.
 1. We know by comparing scripture that we are to add to our personal faith (II Pet 1:5-11).
 2. Personal faith does purify, or make holy, our souls by believing (I Peter 1:22; Acts 15:9).
 3. However, the context of 1:3 and 1:19 and wicked teachers here indicate a further sense.
- D. What is *your most holy faith*? It is the pure apostolic doctrine and gospel of Jesus Christ.
 1. It is directly what Jude wrote the epistle for ... *the faith once delivered to the saints* (1:3).
 2. It is in direct opposition to those who *separate themselves* from the truth (I John 2:19), just as *praying in the Holy Ghost* is in direct opposition to *having not the Spirit*, and just as *keep yourselves in the love of God* is in direct opposition to *sensual* (1:4,19).
 3. It is the joint faith of pure doctrine by plural pronouns (contrast I Cor 3:10; Gal 6:4; etc.).
 4. There was a very real threat of danger to the most holy faith (Acts 20:28-31; II Cor 2:17; II Thess 2:1-3; I Tim 4:1-3; II Tim 2:18; 3:1-5; 4:3-4; II Pet 2:1; I John 2:18).
 5. It is *most holy*, because it is based on the wholesome words of the Lord Jesus (I Tim 6:3).
 6. It is *most holy*, because it leads to holiness, and is much more than a form (II Tim 3:5).
 7. It is *your most holy faith*, because it was given to the churches to uphold (I Tim 3:15).
- E. What is *building up yourselves* in this faith? It is the joint efforts of the church to edify.
 1. God's saints in His churches are to build themselves up in the true faith, so that they are no longer tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine from lying men (Eph 4:13-15).
 2. They do this by every joint and part doing what it can to edify the body (Eph 4:16).

3. It is corporate action of the church to stand for truth and defend it (Phil 1:27; Col 1:23).
 4. Continuing in the true faith is a concern of saints (Acts 14:22; I Cor 16:13; II Cor 13:5).
 5. Churches are built on the doctrinal foundation of Jesus and the apostles (Eph 2:20-22).
 6. There is a building up that takes place by adding to the doctrine of Christ (Heb 6:1-3).
 7. As we have received the truth of Jesus Christ, we are to be established in it (Col 2:6-7).
- F. How do we do it? How do we build up ourselves, our church, on the most holy faith?
1. We must bring all back to the Bible, for there is no true faith apart from God's word.
 2. Scripture is all-sufficient for pastor and people (II Tim 3:16-17; Acts 17:11; I Thes 5:21).
 3. Doctrine must be learned, remembered, and defended (Romans 16:17-18; Titus 3:10-11).
 4. Do you know the certain words of truth, and are you able to use them (Prov 22:17-21)?
 5. We must reject *carnal and contemporary Christian* efforts to ignore doctrinal differences.
 6. We are always edifying – building up – never tearing down (I Cor 14:26; Eph 4:29).
 7. We use assemblies to consider one another and provoke to good works (Heb 10:23-25).
 8. Each member cannot stay the same – they must grow (I Pet 2:2; II Pet 3:18; Heb 5:12).
 9. The apostolic goal is to increase in knowing Christ and not move away (Col 1:9-12,23).
 10. We must remember, teach, practice, and defend the doctrinal and practical landmarks.
 11. Rather than building programs (a gymnasium), we need to build ourselves spiritually.
 12. Fathers must communicate the truth to wives and children within the church body.
 13. We increase our knowledge, assurance, and commitment to the truth of the gospel.

Praying in the Holy Ghost,

- A. Our brother Paul also gave this directive about prayer in warring a good warfare (Eph 6:18).
- B. The Holy Ghost helps (1) with unutterable groanings and (2) the will of God (Rom 8:26-27).
- C. Strength for successful spiritual living comes by the power of the Holy Ghost (Rom 15:13).
- D. There is a lot of praying going on in the name of Christianity, but not much is in the Spirit.
 1. A form of godliness includes many prayers, for all religions have prayers (II Tim 3:5).
 2. How many pray with repetitions of the heathen, thinking that repetition works (Matt 6:7)?
 3. How many pray long prayers of the monastic, thinking that length works (Matt 23:14)?
 4. Prayer can easily become a noise, a vain exercise, a form, or a ritual even for the elect.
 5. When it is only a form, it deceives the simple and discourages the elect by fruitlessness.
 6. Praying in the Holy Ghost will save us from emphasizing the flesh and form in worship.
- E. How do we pray in the Holy Ghost? This sounds important. How do we do it spiritually?
 1. We choose to be filled with the Holy Spirit, by letting the Holy Spirit fill us (Eph 5:18).
 2. We pray submissively for the will of God through the Spirit rather than our own will.
 3. We walk in the Spirit, rather than just live in Him, by choosing His fruit (Gal 5:22-25).
 4. We avoid sins in our lives, for they grieve and quench the Spirit (Eph 4:30; I Thess 5:19).
 5. If you rebel and vex the Holy Ghost (grieve Him), He will turn against you (Is 63:10).
 6. We confess our sins quickly, and in every prayer, to retain the Spirit (Psalm 51:11).
 7. We set our affection on spiritual things and mind them (Rom 8:5-6; Colossians 3:2).
 8. Those who have little regard for the Spirit's Book will never pray in the Holy Ghost.
 9. We pray according to the will of God, as we can read the Spirit's words (I John 5:14).
 10. Ask for the Holy Spirit, which is a sure promise of Jesus Christ to you (Luke 11:15).
 11. When did you last ask the Lord to help you pray in the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:1; 17:5)?

Keep yourselves in the love of God,

- A. Is *love of God* subjective-genitive (God's love) or objective-genitive, (our love for God)?
 - 1. The decision in such cases must be made by the context, which here states our duties.
 - 2. There is no need or opportunity to keep ourselves in God's love of us (Rom 8:38-39).
 - 3. The Lord Jesus Christ used a similar construction for our love for God (Luke 11:42).
 - 4. There was a real danger in perilous times of losing love for God (II Tim 3:4; Rev 2:4).
 - 5. When false teachers and iniquity abound, the love for God waxes cold (Matt 24:11-12).
 - 6. Love is a command. Loving God is the first and greatest commandment (Deut 6:5).
 - 7. There are other texts to consider and analyze the genitive (II Thess 3:5 cp Deut 30:6).
 - 8. Yet, knowing God's love for us is also very important (Romans 5:5; Ephesians 3:14-19).
- B. Can we fall out of loving God? Indeed, and easily! Note the sober warning (Heb 3:12-13).
 - 1. The deceitfulness of sin is able to harden you sufficiently to depart from the living God.
 - 2. What is the difference if we stop loving God or love Him only 50%? Both are profane!
 - 3. Consider Demas. He left the apostle Paul for his love of this present world (II Tim 4:10).
- C. How do we keep ourselves loving God? We cannot be content with defining the genitive.
 - 1. Love is a choice. We set our affections above, not on things on the earth (Colossians 3:2).
 - 2. We choose to not love or befriend the world, which is God's enemy (I Jn 2:15; Jas 4:4).
 - 3. We choose a single eye with love to God only and put our treasures there (Matt 6:21-24).
 - 4. It is little different than any other love: we talk about it; pray for it; think on it; read about it; sing about it; hear about it; keep friends that appreciate it; resent any competitors, etc.

Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

- A. In spite of the above three efforts and any other efforts, eternal life is by the mercy of God.
- B. What is this mercy we should be looking for unto eternal life? The coming of Jesus Christ!
 - 1. This is the blessed hope of the believer to comfort one another (Titus 2:13; I Thess 4:18).
 - 2. If we build up ourselves on our most holy faith, it will be very important (I Thess 1:9-10).
 - 3. Those who look for it and love it will be given eternal life (II Timothy 4:8; Heb 9:28).
- C. The second coming of Jesus Christ kept important in your soul will put the world to death.
 - 1. If everything will be dissolved, then what kind of persons should we be (II Pet 3:10-14)?
 - 2. The man that has the proper hope of our Lord's second coming will be pure (I John 3:3).
 - 3. If your life is hid in Christ with God, you are dead as far as this world goes (Col 3:3-4).
 - 4. The life of faith values important things – the unseen (II Cor 4:17 – 5:8; Phil 3:20-21).
- D. You have not seen the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ til He comes in glory for you forever!
- E. How do you look forward to anything? You make it the chief goal of your life and actions.
 - 1. You learn about it; you think about it; you compare inferior objects to it; you focus on it.
 - 2. You list the advantages of it; you share it with others who appreciate it; you plan for it.

Conclusion:

- 1. The blessed God has chosen you for this conflict, but are you up to the spiritual warfare involved?
- 2. True Christianity is quite simple, as measured by these four duties, which are able to make you great.
- 3. In the face of the religious and spiritual collapse all around us, we have things to do to please God.
- 4. Can you retain the lesson? Should you confess your sin? Will you dedicate yourself to the lesson?

For Further Study:

- 1. The sermon, "They Promise Liberty," ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/pdf/they-promise-them-liberty.pdf>.
- 2. The sermon, "Perilous Times," ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/pdf/perilous-times.pdf>.
- 3. The sermon, "Contemporary Christianity," ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/pdf/contemporary-christianity.pdf>.
- 4. The sermon, "Back to the Bible," ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/pdf/bring-it-back-to-the-bible.pdf>.