

**RECAP OF SESSION 3: RECOGNIZING FALSE TEACHERS (JUDE 8-16)**

In our last session, we explored Jude's vivid descriptions of false teachers, their arrogant and blasphemous nature, and their destructive paths. We saw how Jude contrasted their behavior with the humility of Archangel Michael and used Old Testament examples like Cain, Balaam, and Korah to illustrate their ungodly character and motives [1]. Through powerful metaphors, Jude exposed them as hidden reefs, self-serving shepherds, waterless clouds, and wandering stars, destined for eternal darkness. He also cited Enoch's prophecy to underscore the certainty of God's coming judgment upon them [1]. This session now shifts from warning against the ungodly to exhorting believers on how to stand firm and persevere in their faith amidst such threats.

**REMEMBER
AND REMAIN
JUDE 17-21****EXEGESIS OF JUDE 17-21: REMEMBER AND REMAIN**

Having thoroughly exposed the nature and destiny of false teachers, Jude now turns his attention to the faithful, providing crucial instructions on how to maintain their spiritual integrity and persevere in God's love. This section serves as an antidote to apostasy, offering practical steps for spiritual growth and steadfastness [2].

JUDE 1:17-19 - REMEMBERING THE APOSTOLIC PREDICTIONS

But you, beloved, remember the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions." It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. [3]

Jude addresses his readers as "beloved," a term of endearment that contrasts sharply with his harsh condemnation of the false teachers. He urges them to "remember the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" [2]. This call to remembrance is vital, as it grounds their understanding and response in the authoritative teaching they had already received. The apostles (such as Peter, John, and Paul) had forewarned that "in the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions" [1]. This prediction serves to normalize the presence of false teachers, assuring believers that their appearance is not a sign of God's abandonment but a fulfillment of prophecy [2].

Jude then reiterates the characteristics of these scoffers, describing them as those "who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit" [3]. Their self-centered pursuit of "ungodly passions" leads to discord and fragmentation within the community. The phrase "worldly people" (or "sensual" in some translations) emphasizes their focus on earthly desires rather than spiritual realities, and being "devoid of the Spirit" highlights their spiritual emptiness and lack of genuine connection to God [1]. This serves as a clear identifier for the false teachers and a warning against their influence.

JUDE 1:20-21 - BUILDING UP, PRAYING, AND KEEPING IN GOD'S LOVE

But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. [3]

In contrast to the destructive behavior of the false teachers, Jude provides a powerful exhortation for believers to actively cultivate their faith. This verse contains a central command, "keep yourselves in the love of God," supported by three participles that describe how to do so [2].

1. Building yourselves up in your most holy faith: This refers to the active process of spiritual growth and edification. "Your most holy faith" signifies the body of Christian truth, the objective doctrines that define their belief [1]. Believers are to continually strengthen their understanding and commitment to these foundational truths, much like constructing a building on a solid foundation [2]. This involves diligent study of Scripture, sound teaching, and applying biblical principles to life.

2. Praying in the Holy Spirit: This emphasizes a dynamic and Spirit-empowered prayer life. To pray "in the Holy Spirit" means to pray according to the Spirit's leading, with His enablement, and in alignment with God's will [2]. Such prayer is a vital means of spiritual strength and discernment, especially when facing spiritual opposition.



**REMEMBER
AND REMAIN**
JUDE 17–21

3. Keep yourselves in the love of God: This is the overarching command. While God’s love for believers is steadfast and unconditional, this exhortation calls for active participation in remaining within the sphere of His love [2].

It implies obedience to His commands, living in fellowship with Him, and reflecting His love in one’s actions. This is not about earning God’s love, but about abiding in it through faithful living [2].

These actions are to be undertaken while “waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life” [3]. This phrase reminds believers of their ultimate hope—the return of Christ and the consummation of their salvation. This future hope provides motivation and perspective for present perseverance, anchoring their faith in God’s ultimate plan and mercy [2].

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Why is it important for believers to “remember the predictions of the apostles” regarding scoffers and false teachers?

2. How do the characteristics of scoffers described in Jude 18-19 (following ungodly passions, causing divisions, worldly, devoid of the Spirit) help us identify false influences today?

3. What does it mean to be “devoid of the Spirit” (v. 19), and what are the implications for those who claim to be spiritual leaders but exhibit this trait?

4. Explain the concept of “building yourselves up in your most holy faith” (v. 20). What practical steps can one take to do this?

5. What is the significance of “praying in the Holy Spirit” (v. 20)? How does this differ from ordinary prayer?

6. Jude commands believers to “keep yourselves in the love of God” (v. 21). How does this relate to God’s unconditional love for us?



7. What role does obedience play in “keeping ourselves in the love of God”?

8. How does “waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life” (v. 21) provide motivation for present-day faithfulness?

9. In what ways do these exhortations (building up, praying, keeping in love) serve as an antidote to the dangers posed by false teachers?

10. How can a community of believers collectively apply these instructions to strengthen their faith and resist divisive influences?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Jude 17-21 provides a clear roadmap for spiritual resilience in the face of deception. It calls us to be students of God’s Word, remembering the prophetic warnings that prepare us for spiritual challenges. It emphasizes the necessity of active spiritual growth, urging us to build up our understanding of biblical truth. Furthermore, it highlights the indispensable role of a vibrant prayer life, empowered by the Holy Spirit, as a means of maintaining our connection with God. Ultimately, these verses remind us that our responsibility is to actively abide in God’s love through obedience and faithful living, all while eagerly anticipating the return of Christ. By embracing these practices, we can remain steadfast and secure in our faith.

TAKE-HOME CHALLENGE

This week, choose one of the three exhortations from Jude 20-21 (building up in faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, or keeping yourselves in the love of God) and intentionally focus on deepening your practice of it. For example, dedicate specific time to studying a particular doctrine, commit to more intentional Spirit-led prayer, or identify a concrete way to demonstrate obedience as an act of abiding in God’s love. Reflect on how this practice strengthens your faith and helps you resist worldly influences.

POINTS OF REFLECTION

How does remembering apostolic warnings help you navigate current spiritual challenges without being surprised or discouraged?

What areas of your “most holy faith” do you need to build up more diligently?

How can you cultivate a more consistent and Spirit-led prayer life?

What does it practically look like for you to “keep yourself in the love of God” daily?

How does the hope of “eternal life” influence your commitment to these spiritual disciplines?

References

[1] BibleProject. “Jude.” BibleProject Guides, <https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-jude/>. [2] Enduring Word. “Jude – Contending for the Faith.” Enduring Word Bible Commentary, <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/jude-1/>. [3] The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. (Used for direct scripture quotes for accuracy and consistency).