

FINAL COMMAND TO THE FAITHFUL (I)

Jude 17-25

- I. Remember the Word (vs.17-19)
- II. Remain in God's love (vs.20-21)

INTRODUCTION

Well, we now come to the final, few verses of **Jude**, & Oh! what a relief!

- it is like peace & quiet after a severe storm.
- up to now Jude has been talking very seriously about those who forsake the faith & God's Word.
- “[About] rejecting the truth, God's judgment, & hell. These are sobering realities.
 - “The most natural human response to that of living in an age characterized by apostasy which God promises to punish severely is probably fear.
- “[And today as we are] acutely aware of apostasy it is like standing in the center of a hurricane with raging winds ripping apart everything around us.”

But now, in the middle of all this despair & dome, **Jude** concludes in vs.17-25 with God's wonderful words of command & comfort, courage & confidence.

- & in accordance with Jude's desire he stated in vs.3 that he was going write about the salvation of believers, he now addresses us Christians.
- & he tells us how we can really experience & enjoy & exercise our salvation.
 - we can so that we have nothing to be scared of as we contend for the faith in face of today's filth & falsehood.

And **Jude** also reminds us of what we often forget.

- that the Lord knows His own so that, though He punishes those who proclaim & practice evil & error, --
 - in today's chaotic climate He will protect & preserve those who love & live for Him.
- He will, just as He did **Israel** of old when He devastated **Egypt** with those terrible plagues while He saved & spare His own.

Now it is this truth & assurance of the blessed distinction God makes between believers & unbelievers that **Jude** want to express in the concluding verses of his letter.

- & he wants to tell us “how to experience God's blessings on our lives as Christians even though we live in the midst of apostasy & judgment.”
- th'fore he concludes with 4 FINAL COMMANDS TO THE FAITHFUL for our security & survival.

- **1st**, remember the Word (vs.17-19); **2nd**, remain in God's love (vs.20-21).
 - these 2 points we will consider today.
- the other 2 commands are: rescue the ungodly (vs.22-23); & rest in divine security (vs.24-25).

I. REMEMBER THE WORD (vs.17-19)

Well then, **Jude** has been telling us the way it is with those who deny the Lord.

- with those who spout & spread all kinds of wickedness & wrong.
- & yet whose end is certain doom & destruction & death eternally.

So **Jude** says in vs.17: “But you, Dear Friends & Beloved, those whom I love, who are chosen, loved, & kept by God in Jesus & are commanded to fight for the faith revealed in Scriptures,--

- “You, if you are going to stand steadfast & strong, safe & secure & survive the battle against sin, --
 - “then, You, on your part, must do 4 things: **1st**, remember the words of Christ's apostles, or God's Word.
- & indeed, we must remember this, for we can so easily forget the truths of Bible when apostates & false teachers come with their pompous attitudes & attractive promise.

And is it well to remember the apostles' word because they are of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- they aren't the mere words of men, but of those chosen & sent by Jesus with His message.
- for II Peter 3 says God Himself spoke His Word through them.
 - II Peter 1 says they spoke, not of their own wills, but by the supernatural guidance of H Spirit.

We see then, we may never believe the words of those who come with their own ideas & opinions.

- instead we must only believe & obey the words Lord's apostles recorded in Scripture.
- for they are His Word, the only true & trustworthy guide, about what to believe & how to live.

But now, **Jude** is specifically concerned that we remember the apostles' words of warning in **Bible**.

- like those of Peter who says in the last times there will scoffers of the faith, following their own sinful desires, spiritless, causing divisions.

- mockers & deceivers who come rejecting & ridiculing the truth about Christ's return & judgment, living only according to their own sinful desires.
- or like Paul who says in Acts 20 to be alert for wolves who come in, speaking perverse things to turn us from the Lord.
 - he also says in ITim.4 & IITim.3 in the latter days' people will fall away from the faith, believing & promoting false & demonic doctrines.
 - & they will live evil lives & do all that tickles their fancy.
- John too says in IJo.2 many anti-christs will come in the end days.
- now, Jude says all these words we must remember as we live in the "last days".

And the last days refer to the present & future, for in Bible-talk they are the time between Jesus' 1st & 2nd comings.

- th'fore we are living even now in the last days, closer than ever before to Jesus' return.
 - for in God's sovereign, saving plan & program, nothing remains but the 2nd coming & finally judgment & rewarding & eternity.
- so then Jude & the apostles tell us in the last days, our day too as we can see, wicked & wrong people are coming.
 - scoffers—not ignorant of the Word—but well informed, who deliberately & increasingly tout & twist God's Word.
 - they deny & despise it as they make mockery of all that is sacred.
 - they are openly demonic, showing their ridicule & contempt for Lord by following their own natural instincts & godless lust.

But note: **Jude** adds in vs.19, once again to remind us who these apostates & false teachers really are.

- that they set up divisions by sneaking into pulpits & pews claiming they are the spiritually elite who only have the true knowledge & life, superior to all the rest.
 - & they claim their own the belief & behavior are the only real way to true life, joy, & peace.
- with that they form new groups of followers where Bible is ignored.
 - groups like today's sects & cults, & even cause people to leave their churches.

They also live so wickedly & filthy, controlled by their selfish, evil feelings & drives, that really, as we saw, they aren't so spiritual as they think.

- instead they are dominated by the flesh & so they are worldly minded.
- as a matter of fact, Jude says they really aren't Christians at all, for they are devoid of Spirit.

These then are those who are coming in these last days **Scripture** warns.

- & Jesus says in Matt.24 they will only increase & get worse as the end gets even closer.
- for there will be a great falling away & the greatest persecution ever know in history.

Th'fore, to be alert & strong & stable to get through these difficult time, we must remember & believe & live the words of the apostles, of **Jude** & Jesus, or God's Word.

- we must remember that these things will surely happen.
- then we won't be caught off guard, our faith shaken, as we see them occurring today.
 - but we will be prepared to face any falling away from the faith.

And too, when we see this happening just as Lord predicted in His Word, then we will have confidence He is still in sovereign control of the situation.

- then we can put our total trust in Him & be at peace despite the storms swirling around us.
- for we know He will keep us safe & secure & strong.
 - & He will surely judge & punish the corrupt & crooked as He also promises.

So the command: **Remember** & believe God's Word to be on guard & protected against increasing apostasy.

- stay in His Word; be faithful in reading & studying it.
- then our faith will be strong, & we will always be prepared to face today's falsehood & filth.
 - that's the way we are going win in the fight for the faith against the attacks on the Church.
- remember then: to be forewarned is to be forearmed.

II. REMAIN IN GOD'S LOVE (vs.20-21)

But now **Jude** goes on in vs.20-21 with his 2nd command for strength & endurance in the furious fight for the faith against unbelief & sinful living.

- he says in the midst of it all, it is important to stay in the place where God says it is safe for us.
 - that we keep ourselves or REMAIN IN HIS LOVE.
- & we do that by cultivating the Christian virtues of faith & prayer, love & hope.

You see, the 1 central command in these 2 verses is to **keep ourselves in God's love**.

- while the other 3 commands in vs.20-21—to build, to pray, & to wait, --

- they tell us just how we can go about remaining in Lord's love.

Th'fore God commands we must stay in His love where we will only receive His blessed presence & almighty power to make it through & be victorious.

- now the idea here is the covenant relationship between God & His people in which He promises to be our God & we His people.
- And so, the command means we must continually remain in the love Lord sovereignly & savingly gives us in Jesus Christ, so that in turn we will love Him more & more.

But this beautiful, blessed covenant relationship of love between God & His people also carries with it this responsibility: we must accept His love.

- & live only according to His Word & will.
- Jude then commands we must see to it that we do all we can to remain in this sphere of Lord's love by lovingly believing & obeying Him more & more.
- And that's exactly what Jesus also teaches in Jo.15.
 - there He says: "As the Father loved me, so I love you; remain in my love!"

Now, of course it is so true we are kept by God, **Jude 3** says, so we will never be separated from Him & His love in Jesus Christ, as **Rom.8** also says.

- we are safe & secure because He has done it all to save us.
- but that doesn't ever mean we can then just sit back, do nothing, & enjoy basking in God's love & gifts until the day we die or He returns.

God forbid, if this is what we think & do, for **Bible** teaches there ia another side to God's eternal **preservation** of the saved in Christ.

- it is we must also preserve in the Christian faith & life.
- Phil.2:12 says the salvation we receive by grace alone must be worked out in fear & trembling in all parts of our lives.
 - we must consciously enjoy & exercise & express our salvation in every part of our being & daily living everywhere on this planet.

Now that's exactly what **Jude** is saying too.

- though in 1 sense we can't ever drift beyond the Lord's love & care, yet to remain close to Him, we must work hard at always loving & obeying Him.
- we must constantly strive to remain in the area of His love so we will continually know & live His love & all the gifts it brings.
 - & we must want to stay close to God to possess His presence & power to keep in His love.

Th'fore we are commanded to remain in the Lord's love so He can love & bless us.

- & Jo.15:10 says to abide in His love we must keep His commandments.
- how true: to keep experiencing God's love we must be in His will, believing & obeying His Word.

That means then, if we aren't living according to Lord's rules, --

- if they aren't the only law & guide for all of life—in our homes & schools, in our offices & recreation, & on our farms—but we are still living in sin by our own rules, --
 - we aren't loving God 1st & foremost, & our neighbors as ourselves, --
 - if we aren't in church regularly with fellow Christians where God's Word & will are proclaimed & studied, or we aren't studying Scriptures personally, --
- then we aren't in the place where He can love & bless & keep us.
 - we will never experience His love, but only His wrath & judgment
 - &, of course, we will never be powerful enough to stand & survive today's corruption.

That's why **Jude** says we must remain in Lord's love, & do that by constantly **building ourselves up in our most holy faith.**

- you see, godless people strive only for their own gain & glory.
- but Christians are commanded to build themselves & each other up to maintain & strengthen the unity of the Christian community.

But now notice: he says we must build ourselves & each other up only on the foundation there is: **our faith.**

- that's because it is the 1 & only true teaching God has given us in Scripture for our salvation.
- & it is the most holy faith, for it is from God & is different from any other man-made religions & philosophies.
 - it is the faith & all we need to be forgiven, cleansed, & changed from sin.
 - & made into totally new persons to live eternally with Lord.

So, **Jude** says in **vs.20** we must constantly build ourselves up only in this God-given faith.

- only on this divinely revealed body of saving truths in Bible.
- in other words, the Christian faith & life aren't founded on something we made ourselves.
 - or on our personal opinions, but only that which is from Lord in Bible.

Th'fore we must make **Scriptures** the only foundation & standard of our faith & life.

- & to do that is a life-long task.

- the task of constantly holding fast & firm to all Bible's teachings.
 - to constantly study & apply God's Word to our lives.
 - to become more convinced & assure of what we believe, more cleansed of sins, & more consecrated to Christ in all we say & do.

You see, only in that way will we ever be strong in our Christian faith & living.

- for only built on Bible with Christ at center of our wills & workings, we will be in the very place God lives & can love us.
- then, when we don't neglect His Word, we will be able to stay strong & firm in that place of His will & love & blessings.
 - & no evil & error, no matter how severe their attacks, can push us out of that place.
 - but we will be safe & secure to get through it.

The 2nd way we must remain in Lord's love is, vs.20 says, is by praying in the HSpirit.

- you see, we must always realize we can never become so spiritually strong, so theologically knowledgably & correct, that we reach the point when we no longer need to depend on God.
- if we do, then we will certainly be pushed out of the circle of His love & care, His keeping & strengthening.

And so, in the battle against wickedness & wrong we've got to realize we are completely depend on God so that we must pray constantly in HSpirit.

- Eph.6 says to stand against the forces of devil & sin, we must stand in the strength of Lord.
- & it says we can only that if we are always praying in Spirit.

Now to pray in the Spirit means we must only pray according to God's will.

- you see, Rom.8 says by ourselves we don't know how to pray properly.
- so, we need Holy Spirit who can only help us to pray according to Lord's will.
 - in Him then we only have the power & guidance to pray from our hearts with sincere faith & not with any doubts.
- & it is only by Spirit's presence & power can we then build ourselves in the Christian faith & life.

That's why it is so important & imperative to never neglect prayer in our lives & together in the Church.

- for Scripture teaches to receive the HSpirit, must pray & ask God for Him.
- & we must pray so He will more & more fill & control, rule & guide us by His Word.

- or else without Him & His working we will never be safe in God's love & strong in the faith.

The 3rd thing we must do to remain in God's love, is vs.21 says, is to **wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring us to eternal life.**

- remember Enoch? —he walked so close to God when he learned the flood was coming because he knew nothing else really matter, & so he walked close & only for Lord.
- well, that's what Jude means with his 3rd command to wait for Christ's return.
 - as Christians, we must always live in faith & love & obedience & praise to God.
 - we must, because we know & are eagerly expecting Jesus to return when we will receive His mercy & eternal life in all their fullness & perfection forever.

Now, when we so live & work & wait for Jesus' 2nd coming, firm in God's Word, praying in Spirit, keeping ourselves holy, doing all we can to obey His will, --

- then for sure we will remain in His love & be blessed now & forever.

And is there any other place that is the safest & only place we want to be as we are confronted with all kind of today's filth & falsehood, vice & violence?

- than to be in God's love, for it is the surest, safe-guard against Satan & sin?
- indeed Jo.10&14&15 says it like this: we must abide in God's love; & we can only do that when we do His will & love Him.
 - then He will make His home with us so that nothing or no one will ever take us out of His hands.
 - & we will have comfort & courage, confidence & peace no matter what.

So, let me ask you again, is there any better place of security & protection that we can have than having God's loving presence & power?

- & to have His arms wrapped around us at all times?
- indeed, IThess.5 says His love is our breastplate of protection.

CONCLUSION

Th'fore, as **Jude** reminds us, **Beloved, Dear Christian Friends, loved of God,** these are the 1st 2 commands we must obey to have strength, --

- to possess refuge & security & survival in our fight for the faith against all wrong.
- we must remember the Word, remain in Lord's love, build ourselves up on Bible, pray in Spirit.
 - wait & work for Jesus' return.
- then Lord will surely be with us & will empower us.
 - & we will win the victory in fighting for the Lord. AMEN