

Commentary on the Book of Jude

1Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James,

Jude identifies himself in the way that most of the early church leaders did by calling himself a bond-servant. He understands that his life is to be willfully surrendered to the call of Christ upon his life. Jude also shows humility by not mentioning the fact that he is the half brother of Jesus. He mentions only that he is the brother of James, who is not a supremely well known figure. After earlier rejecting Jesus as the Christ, Jude now confesses that he is indeed a follower of Christ.

To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:

As one who has been called by the mercy of God, having rejected Christ whom he lived right beside for years on end, he writes to the called of Christ who are beloved in God and kept for Christ. No one can snatch the called out of the hand of God (John 10:28-29). Believers are preserved for the day of Christ (Psalm 97:10). This does not mean that believers cannot rebel; it means merely that Christ will perfect the faith that He has begun.

2May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.

Mercy was the beginning point of saving faith, and mercy will be needed to complete the sanctification process. God gives peace to those who cast their cares upon Him. Yet the battle for faith will increase, so more peace will be needed. Love, the chief identifying characteristic of the believer, must also increase despite hardship. All of this is by the grace of God through faith.

3Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

Jude was taking it upon himself to write to his brothers and sisters in Christ to encourage them in their faith and rejoice over what they all had in common in Christ. When the church is pure in its confession, the center of attention can be the God of the confession. But when false teaching erodes essential doctrine, then what is common must be fought for. The people of God must switch their mindset to a sort of defensive battle-mode in identifying and combating false teaching.

Jude makes an especially important point about Christian belief. Christian faith, the body of doctrine that forms the Christian confession, was given by Christ and through the apostles by the moving of the Holy Spirit. That confession can never change. What Christians are to believe about Christ, the gospel, God, Christ's return, justification, and other core doctrines cannot be altered. If such a confession is challenged, such a person is to be declared accursed. As Galatians 1:9 says, "As we have said before, so I say again

now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!" The message of salvation must be preserved as it was given (see 1 Corinthians 15:1-3 for an example). Yet faith without works is dead. Some false teaching is not an obvious denial of the Deity of Christ or of salvation by grace through faith. Sometimes it is an abuse of such doctrines, saying for example, that grace allows sin to abound. A false teacher might redefine grace to say that it gives the Christian the right to do whatever he wants. Others might explain that grace requires a working on our part to receive it rather than works which are an evidence of saving faith.

The command from Jude is an urgent appeal that we as believers (not just the elders) contend for the faith. This means that we must first know what we believe. Secondly, it means that we must be willing to stand for truth when false teaching invades our circles of influence, most importantly our churches. The body of truth that is the message of salvation is able to save a person (Romans 1:16). Thus, we can expect Satan to attack, abuse, and distort that message in any way possible. Sometimes contending for the faith means showing in the public circles that faith in God and in Christ is credible. This is where apologetics comes in.

A question arises as to how much of Christian belief must be contended for. A common response is that as long as somebody believes the gospel, it doesn't matter what else that they might believe. Their conclusion is that we ought to all just agree to disagree on the "peripheral" issues. But where does one draw the line between essential and peripheral? The Scripture doesn't make such a differentiation. In fact, the apostles and early church devoted themselves to the Word because they believed that all of the Scripture that they had at the time was worth studying, each and every word and each and every verse. In fact, they probably knew Deuteronomy 4:2 which says, "You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you." They would have understood that the entire Old Testament was for their learning and study. All of it was relevant, true, important, and essential to their understanding of God and of His character and plan. Even a prophecy to Egypt or Moab would be considered relevant because it provided a means of seeing how God responds to wickedness and injustice. No Scripture was beyond the Holy Spirit's purpose in including it in the first place. Indeed this teaching is in Romans 15:4 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17 explaining that *all* that has been written by the Holy Spirit is adequate. Not just the "essential" parts of Scripture but all of Scripture is assumed to be essential and necessary for the man of God to be adequate and equipped. May we stop the parceling of essential and nonessential and core and peripheral and not lower our standard below the one that God has given. See, maybe we don't literally add or take away a word from the Bible, but what we do do is declare what parts of the Scripture are worth believing, studying, and holding as a core conviction. Jude tells us to contend for the faith. If God tells us that His Word is worth His contending with anyone who would dare add or take away a word from it, then why should we as His body do any less (Revelation 22:18)? We must fight for every word of Scripture. No part is nonessential or irrelevant. The whole Scripture must be fought for. Interestingly, the enemy understands this and is constantly trying to devise ways of undermining the credibility of the text (Genesis 1 as a myth, Song of Solomon as merely

allegory, the four gospel accounts as coming from an earlier source called “Q,” the gospel of Judas being put on par with the other gospels, Revelation being made to suit preconceived notions, and so on). God is concerned with every word, even the difficult passages on head coverings and women keeping silent in the church, and so we must concern ourselves with them also.

If a brother or sister decides to not hold to a belief because it is too controversial or because they do not want to take Scripture literally, then that is their prerogative. However, that doesn't mean that both the person who takes the position literally and the one who does not are right. One is right, one is wrong, or both are wrong. Both, since their positions are different and contradictory, cannot be right. At the very least we must be willing to regard the whole of Scripture as worthwhile and relevant. I understand that godly brothers will come to different conclusions, but at least let each stand upon his conclusion with reason from the Scripture to do so. They can still love one another and serve and worship God together, but at least let them live with conviction. Passionless and convictionless living is not acceptable (Revelation 3:19). That said, we must all approach the Word of God with an open heart and mind so that we can all attain to the unity of the faith which is found through growing into a common maturity in Christ through a unified understanding of the Scriptures (Ephesians 4:12ff).

4For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

The reason that we must contend for the faith is that certain persons (the false teachers) have crept in unnoticed. They are unnoticed because they have sneaked their way into the fellowship. They look the role and play the part, but the reality is that they are wolves in sheeps' clothing. They masquerade as ministers of the light but they are in fact ministers of darkness. They are also unnoticed because of a lack of discernment on the part of the believers. This is why Jude calls the believers to contend for truth and for the faith. If they do not, it is only a matter of time before it will be eroded. The nature of the deception is that it will be eroded without their even realizing what has happened. Satan and his followers, the false teachers, are extremely shrewd and able to trick and entice even by misusing the Word of God. The funny thing is that many Christians do not think that false teaching is all that significant of a deal or that it is something really to be reckoned with or concerned about. This is because false teaching by its nature is often difficult to identify, especially when Christians aren't being taught the full counsel of God because much of it is considered “nonessential.” The reason why false teaching is not perceived to be the threat that it really is because it creeps in unnoticed.

Those who creep are those who have been marked out for condemnation long ago. Their doom is sure and their judgment certain. In the meantime, such individuals need to be identified by the church and cast from their fellowship being called accursed. False teachers are characterized by the fact that they are ungodly in their character. The particular false teachers Jude is referring to (though it is a general truth about false teaching as well) are saying that grace allows Christians to sin as they please. They also

deny Jesus as Lord and Master. He may have been a good teacher, a prophet among many others, or a crazy man, but in no way according to the false teachers is He God. If a false teacher did acknowledge His deity, which some do, they certainly do not submit to His Lordship, and it is doubtful whether or not they would encourage others to submit either.

5Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all, that the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.

Jude now begins to correct part of the reason that this group of believers was vulnerable to false teaching. They had known the Old Testament, but they had since forgotten. They supposed that knowing it once they would know it once for all and never need to meditate upon it further. The reality is that they had forgotten history and how God had worked in history. After the Lord led the Jews out of Egypt, He destroyed the Egyptians. The lesson is that false teachers will meet their doom.

6And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day,

And angels who didn't do what they were supposed to do but intermarried with humans (Genesis 6:4) are kept under eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day when Christ returns and casts Satan and the demons into the lake of fire. Perhaps these are some of the spirits to whom Peter is referring to in 1 Peter 3:19. The lesson is that evil will be judged.

7just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

Those in Sodom and Gomorrah also spurned the authority of God and went after aberrant and immoral sexual desires. As the demons went after men, so these went after homosexual desires. The lesson is that they were punished by fire which led to physical death which will lead to the second death in an eternal fire.

8Yet in the same way these men, also by dreaming, defile the flesh, and reject authority, and revile angelic majesties.

The false teachers are likened to those in Sodom and Gomorrah and those of the fallen angelic domain because they dream, defile the flesh, reject authority, and revile angelic majesties. The word for dreaming implies that they are fantasizing about sensuous and sexual images and experiences which lead to immoral behavior. They are pulled by their lust into leading others astray and into taking advantage of the weak. They defile their flesh in their immorality, and they reject authority by taking on the name of one who is a

God-follower but spurning His commandments. They revile angelic majesties in that they speak evil and in irreverent ways of those who are ministers of the Most High God.

9But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

They also do this by taking matters of judgment and vengeance into their own hands. Michael disputed with the devil over the body of Moses. What for exactly and to what end we are not told. The lesson is that Michael the archangel (God's chief angel) did not pronounce a judgment against the devil but put the judgment into the Lord's hands.

10But these men revile the things which they do not understand; and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed.

The false teachers on the other hand speak evil of things which they don't even understand. They feign some hidden understanding, making others feel dependent upon some gift or insight that they have. The things that they do know are not the wisdom of God but the foolishness of a darkened heart given over by God to evil. Their knowledge is base like an animal who operates by instinct. Their instincts lead them to take advantage of others by getting them power, prestige, wealth, sexual advantage, or some other kind of fleshly advantage. It is these things which will lead to their ultimate destruction when God sentences them to punishment in hell.

11Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

These men will be judged and it will not be pleasant for them. They will be completely undone. Their gain will be lost and turned as judgment on their own head. They went the way of Cain by doing things their own way, despising the authority and instruction of God, and taking matters into their own hands. Cain killed Abel to satisfy his lust for vengeance and the false teachers take advantage of others to satisfy their own appetites. They have gone head over heels for error, specifically the error of Balaam. Balaam's error was that he wanted to use the power and influence of the divine for his own gain. He was wicked to the core, trying to harm the people of God for financial gain. The false teachers do the same. Just as Korah rebelled and was judged by God in the sight of Israel for spurning the authority of God, so too the false teachers will be judged for believing the authority of God to be something to be mocked and taken lightly.

12These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted;

These men are hidden reefs in the love feasts, feasting with believers without fear. The believers often shared meals together and called them love feasts. They were celebratory

of the love for one another that they had in their mutual bond in knowing Christ. These men join these feasts without having any qualm about the fact that they are not saved themselves. They do it to get to know the believers and to lead them astray and take advantage of them. Hidden reefs cause shipwreck, and this is what the false teachers were trying to make of the faith of the believers. 1 Timothy 1:18-20 says, “This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, so that they will be taught not to blaspheme.” Believers can and do make shipwreck of their faith. Their testimony is lost and their ability to bear fruit for the kingdom is compromised. Their souls can be saved but through as through fire. Those who have been deceived need to be handed over to Satan (cast out of fellowship) so that their faith can be restored to them. False teaching must be contended with and fought against. As Paul tells Timothy, the way to keep from being shipwrecked is to hold to the faith (maintain the sound confession and commitment to the authority of the entire Scriptures) and to maintain a good conscience (not doing anything that goes against the conviction of the Spirit).

The false teachers care only for themselves and not any that they feign interest in. They come alongside acting as though they want to disciple others, but their motives are actually for destruction. They know no more, nor do they have any hidden knowledge and wisdom. They need to be pointed out and cast out. Too often Christians are too nice in this realm. False teachers are to be removed from the fellowship and exposed for who they are, thus eliminating their ability to work under the radar.

They are clouds without water. They offer a refreshing downpour of rain but are merely a cloud that looks like it has rain but never gives any. Obviously those who will be most tempted to fall for this rainless dark cloud are those who are spiritually parched themselves either because of a lack of receiving good teaching or because of outstanding sin issues in their lives. These empty clouds are carried along by winds, not operating on conviction but upon the most immediate way to satisfy their fleshly lusts. They are not committed to doctrinal truth but to whatever wind of doctrine that most appeals to them at the moment.

They are autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead and uprooted. A tree in autumn is supposed to bring forth a harvest of fruit that will build up and encourage others. These men are trees, but they are dead, having no fruit whatsoever. In fact, they are so dead that they are not even planted in the ground. The believer is to be a tree firmly planted by streams of water and bearing fruit in its season (Psalm 1). Yet the false teachers are like the wicked, been blown about like chaff and tumbleweed, acting as trees but being nothing but dead worthless branches deserving to be burned.

13wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.

Jude uses yet more imagery of the false teachers calling them wild waves of the sea that cast up their own shame like foam. Their lives have no anchor and their lusts lead them to do unprincipled things because of their lack of self-control. Like wild waves that want to cause shipwreck, they splash about seeking whom they can destroy. Their deeds expose their own shame, and indeed they glory in the amount of foam (destruction and confusion) that they can cast up. The glory of the false teacher is in what should be his shame as he leads others astray and indulges his flesh (Philippians 3:19).

14It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, 15to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

Though Enoch's account is not canonical, by the Holy Spirit we know that this particular passage of it is given of God. Enoch lived long ago, only seven generations after Adam. But evil was already rampant at that time. Indeed it would only get worse in the future (2 Timothy 3:13). Yet even that long ago the judgment of the evildoers of Jude's day and of our own is foretold. When Christ returns, his holy ones will be with Him to mete out His judgment upon the ungodly for their ungodly deeds. Everything that every ungodly person ever said against God will be held to their account. The account of the believer is wiped clean, but the account of the ungodly is what will be used to sentence them into the eternal fire. It was true in Enoch's day, and it is true for our day.

16These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage.

False teachers seek to cause division and make people question their convictions. They grumble about Christian virtues and practices, complaining and accusing those who try to lead others into truth. They cloak their fault-finding in Christian discernment, but the fruit of their labor is to cause people to become scornful of God and His Word. The false teacher works to cultivate an impression in the minds of the hearers that only the false teacher and his friends have the true answer. They follow after their own lusts, which is what makes them fault-find in the first place. They are not trying to build others up or confront others of sin. They are just making others doubt, question, divide, and think wrong thoughts about others.

They speak arrogantly so that people will think that they have some knowledge and wisdom above other committed Christians and God's Word. They flatter others, making them feel good about themselves by giving them a false sense of security in where they are in their Christian life. They falsely "edify" by building up egos, which increases reliance upon the flesh. The fruit of their labor is always to gain an advantage for themselves, where they can lead more astray and satisfy their lusts further. Eyes are taken off of Christ and put upon them, which is the intention of their arrogant boasts.

17But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ,

18that they were saying to you, "In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts."

Jude reminds the believers that they should remember that the apostles had already warned them that mockers were going to come who would follow after their own ungodly lusts. Peter specifically mentions this in 2 Peter 3:3. Now Jude, writing only a few years later, is saying that the mockers are already here, inundating the flock with false teaching and cunning. We would do well to remember 2 Timothy 3:13 which says, "But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived."

We must stand firm in what we know, being aware of the fact that deceivers are rampant. If we let our guard down in any way or elevate any authority above that of the Bible, we make ourselves prey.

19These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit.

False teachers cause division. The gospel causes division, but it is a healthy division between unsaved and saved. The unsaved need to know that they are unsaved before they can be saved. The division of the false teachers is unhealthy in that it takes the unified brothers and sisters in Christ who have the common faith and confession and it makes them quarrel and complain against one another over silly things. It compromises doctrine and thus causes further division as people approach the Scriptures in different ways. To give into false teaching is to say that multiple divisions of belief within the church are acceptable, especially if we are talking about one individual church. A plurality of beliefs on a matter is likely to be a reality, but all must search the Scriptures to see what the actual belief ought to be.

False teachers, in addition to causing strife, dissension, and meaningless disputes about words (as opposed to a meaningful dialogue probing the Scriptures for truth), are worldly minded and devoid of the Spirit. These apostates are clearly unbelievers, in case that is not already obvious from the fact that they have been called ungodly over and over again (see v. 15). The Spirit does not cause division and incite others to immorality. These false teachers are workers and ministers of the devil, even captives of the devil themselves. Their mind is based upon worldly wisdom, which is pragmatic, self-centered, and takes to manipulation and taking advantage of others. Their thoughts are not sanctified in any way for they cannot be. This is why false teachers who deny Christ must be treated as those who are accursed, and they must be cast out of the fellowship and the error of their teaching exposed. If the devil was walking among us, would we just let him carry on conversations with us, especially with those who are weak or new in the Lord? We cannot let wolves meander about devouring the sheep. If we do, we will have worldly churches.

20But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

In stark contrast to the ways and methods of the false teachers, the believers are to be growing in their faith which is holy, not having the mind or desires of the world. Never is it God's plan for believers to be stagnant. The call of the believers is to build one another up and to build our own selves up as we immerse ourselves in the Word of God, in sound teaching, and in prayer. Prayer is crucial to growing in Christ. We need to be able to routinely cultivate and express our heart's burdens and praise to the God who is in all things and over all things. We need to ascertain the mind of Christ to know how we are to make decisions each day. We must always live in the presence of God. Of course He is always present, even within our hearts, but we must by faith appropriate that truth daily. Prayer is the best Biblical way of doing that. If we find that our prayer life is faltering, our desire to pray is diminishing, or our prayers seem to be hindered in some way, we may have to ask ourselves if we have been deceived in some way. We need to take regular inventory of our hearts by the work of the Spirit to see if any wicked way is there. If wickedness is there, we need to pray to see where it came from and what error in belief has caused it to be there. We need to know the Word of God in order to be able to do adequate introspection.

21keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

We as believers keep ourselves in the love of God by abiding in Christ and keeping His commandments. Nothing can ever separate us from the love of God, this we know. It is not our job to keep our own salvation. God promises to do that. What we are responsible for are the choices that we make on the journey of sanctification which is by grace through faith. In fear and trembling, we are to work out our own salvation, knowing that it is God who is working within us to accomplish His good and perfect will. To experience answered prayer, to bear abundant fruit, and to be an effective witness for Christ, we must practice holiness. If we want to experience the fullness of the Christian life in Christ, we must continue to have faith and not doubt. If we want to keep experiencing the fullness of the love of Christ and being sure of our future in Christ, we must be holy in our behavior (our salvation is secure no matter what but our own ability to have faith in that reality hinges upon our level of faithfulness.

The believer is also to wait anxiously for the mercy of Christ which will finish the work He started, bringing us into His heaven. It is easy to become fixed upon the here and now and to forget that the fullness of the promise is yet to come. Each day we must choose by faith to look and fix our eyes upon the grace that is yet to come. The believer is always to live with eternity in mind. We are to be preparing ourselves for the marriage feast of the Lamb by being spotless and blameless before our King. The believer desires earnestly every day that the Lord would come quickly and bring him into His kingdom. Such an understanding and practice of thought leads to wise stewardship of time, energy, and resources in this life. Our view of eternity affects how we live in the here and now. We have much to look forward to, so let us live like it.

22And have mercy on some, who are doubting;

23save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.

There are three groups of people that Jude is referring to. The first are those who are believers struggling with their faith. They might be questioning whether or not they are saved, how the Scriptures came to us, or how God still loves them after they repeatedly sinned in some manner. Regardless of their specific cause of doubt, their doubt is from a sincere motivation. They are probing, questioning, learning, and seeking the truth. They want to know reasons for belief, they want to be assured, and they want their faith to increase. This is a healthy doubt that is normative in the life of a believer. It typically precedes a growth period as we increase in faith by God's grace. To such believers, we are to show mercy. We don't need to rebuke them, and certainly they do not need a harsh reprimand or preaching at. They need to be gently and confidently walked through the Scriptures to see the correct answer. A little child once asked a preacher if she was a Christian. She had some doubts about faith, which is common in that period of life for those who have been saved at a very early age. He walked her through the Scriptures asking her about what she believed. When she said she believed the truth about Jesus and the cross, he affirmed that she was in fact a Christian. He showed her that her desires for others to be saved and for reading the Bible was further evidence that God was in her heart giving her those desires. This is a great example of gently and mercifully giving encouragement to those who have sincere doubt.

The second group is believers who are deeper in their doubt to such an extent that it is putting any possible future fruitfulness for the kingdom in jeopardy. They are in danger of making decisions that cannot or mostly cannot be rectified. Sin leads to death. Some sin leads to death of the mind, while others lead to death of the emotions, while others lead to physical death. This is a person who is in danger of going off of the deep end into immorality, drug abuse, suicide, cult practice, false teaching, and so on. They need to be snatched from the fire, as one would pull a person out of the way of a moving vehicle. Something drastic and urgent must be done to preserve the life of the one who is in sin. Sometimes a person gets so caught up in sin that they cannot rationally or of their own willpower free themselves. They may not know how to make the power of Christ a reality in their lives to resist temptation. They need outside help. This is seen in a parent sending their child to a Christian rehabilitation center to help them get over their eating disorder. It is seen in a parent sending their child to a drug rehabilitation center. It is seen in grounding a child so that they cannot associate with a bad group of friends. I even heard of one father who wouldn't let his grown daughter leave their home because she was going to marry an unbeliever. She later repented and married wisely. She thanks him to this day. Sometimes we are just so far gone or deceived that we need somebody to grab us by the shirt collar and pull us out from throwing ourselves into the fire.

To the third group, which may just be a subset of the second, we must show mercy with fear, hating even the garment that is polluted by the flesh. Mercy has been the rule in all of this. When false teaching comes in, some begin to doubt their faith and sound doctrine, others get steeped in the lies, and still others are utterly destroyed by the lies, forgetting even their former purification from the flesh. It is possible that some of the

victims of the false teachers were unbelievers to begin with, and thus the work of the false teaching is to keep them unsaved. Yet in the context this seems to be more of a warning to believers to watch out for false teaching leading them or their friends and family astray, thus not enabling them to keep themselves in the love of God (v. 21). Viewing the exhortation from Jude as appealing to believers, it seems that the point of his command is that the believers who are trying to keep other believers from sinning must be careful as they do so, hating even how close they have to come to seeing and experiencing sin and its effects themselves. They must fear because they could get caught up in the same sin if they are not careful. As a believer is it always better to be innocent of evil (Matthew 10:16). We don't have to sin to know not to sin. We are better off just believing the Word of God and heeding the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Thus we are to hate even how being exposed to sin is defiling to an extent. It is even possible being around doubters long enough to begin to doubt also. But typically a person who is interested in helping someone overcome doubt knows how to Biblically find answers to doubt. Thus, the command to show mercy with fear probably has to do with those who are trying to pull other believers from sin's consuming effects. No believer, no matter how much Christian maturity they have, is invulnerable to temptation and being around sin. We are always to seek to restore our brothers and sisters, but we must guard our own hearts and minds in the process. Being a fireman and pulling a person from a burning building that is about to collapse upon itself is dangerous and difficult work. It takes training, skill, concentration, and courage. The fireman must consider the life of the one in danger more important than his own life. Yet in the context of Jude, the building is burning because the person in it started the fire. Yet mercy calls to God's firemen to try to save the person anyways.

**24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,
25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.**

After those somewhat scary exhortations, Jude ends by turning upwards to God. With all of the false teaching going around and how dangerous and contagious it is to be around it, we had better remember the character and the power of the God we serve. God is indeed able to keep His followers from stumbling. He doesn't tempt us beyond what we are able, and He promises to meet all of our needs and strengthen us as we need. We don't have to fall into deceptions, and we don't have to be overcome by sin. We need to contend for the truth of the full counsel of God, and we need to study it, praying to God for help and guidance all the way. We can be sure that He can make us blameless so that we can stand in His presence and glory with great joy rather than shame. The journey heavenward is a process. Before we rule with Christ forever, we must meet Him in the air and face His judgment. We don't want to shrink back in shame but rather exclaim joyfully at His coming. He alone is God and Christ alone is the Savior of the world. He has the name above every name, and thus He is Lord. He will return as victor and conqueror. Thus to His name be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority. God has been on the throne before time began, He is on the throne now, and He will be forever. There is no reason to fear as long as we are His children. The false teachers and apostates have

reason to fear, but believers are preserved by Him for the day of the revelation of their faith (1 Peter 1:5). It is worth taking the measures to protect ourselves and our flocks from false teachers.

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