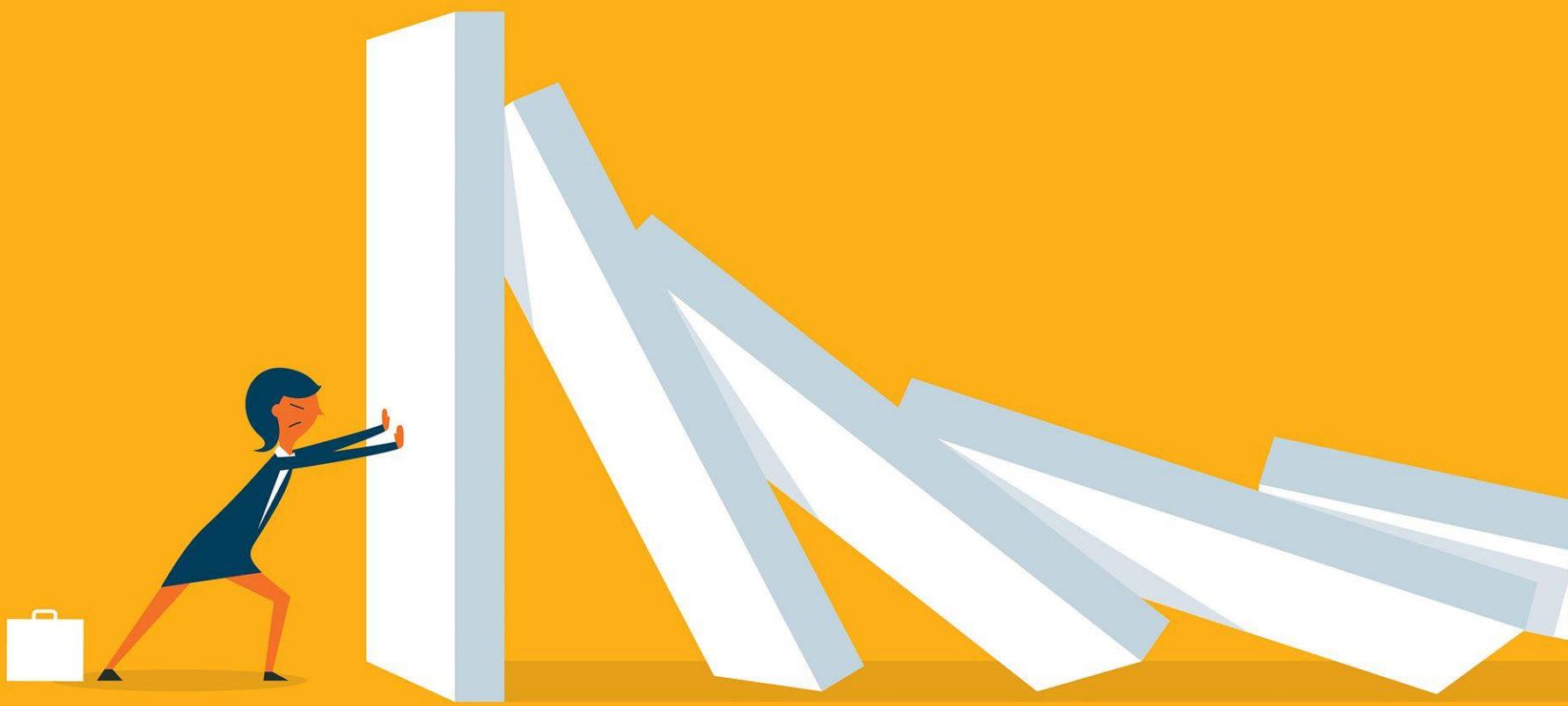


Keep Yourselves in the Love of God

Jude 20-23

Jude

a study of the epistle



Resistance is Important

But if all we do is focus on resisting, we can lose focus on our faith.

Jude 20-21

20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,
21 keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

The Trinity is Evident Here

1. “praying in the Holy Spirit”
2. “the love of God (the Father)”
3. “the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ”

Another Set of 3 from Jude

1. “building yourselves up on your most holy faith”
2. “praying in the Holy Spirit”
3. “waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ”



1. “building yourselves up on your most holy faith”

The metaphor is exhorting believers to build on the solid foundation of their faith.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15

10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. **11** For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. **12** Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, **13** each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. **14** If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. **15** If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

Ephesians 2:20-22

20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, **21** in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, **22** in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

1 Peter 2:5

5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

What is our “most holy faith?”

The gospel of Jesus Christ and the doctrine of the church as taught by the apostles.

- Remember what Jude commanded us to do way back in v. 3:
“contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints”

Want to Remain in God's Love?

Step 1:

Continue to grow in understanding of the gospel and the biblical teaching that were handed down to you when you came to Christ.

And this is not some mystical experience
– we grow when we work on our faith.

Question

How much more do you appreciate and understand God's love and God's Word now than the day you were saved?

Why is that the case?

2. “praying in the Holy Spirit”

FYI: many charismatics believe that this verse refers to speaking in tongues.



Parallel in Ephesians 6:18

18 With all prayer and petition
pray at all times in the
Spirit, and with this in view, be
on the alert with all perseverance
and petition for all the saints
***Clearly this is not teaching tongues...**

Exclusive to Believers

We are commanded to pray in the Holy Spirit.

But the false teachers, as Jude said in v. 19, are “devoid of the Spirit.”

We have the atomic bomb.



Jude's Prayers would include:

- God's will to be done
- **Strength to resist**
- Praise
- **Petitions**

The fact is that if we are to keep ourselves in the love of God, that relationship must be nurtured by prayer.



Jude's Imperative:

**“Keep
Yourselves in
the Love of
God”**

The Fact is:

Our love for God depends upon His love
for us (1 John 4:19).

In v. 1, believers are “kept for Jesus Christ.”

And in v. 21, believers are to keep themselves
“in the love of God.”

Which is it?



Truth from Scripture:

The Lord secures and holds our
salvation...

And believers must avoid apostasy and
corruption, which is prevented by
growing maturity in the Christian faith.

We remain in the faith because of the
work of Christ...

And we are responsible to mature in the
faith.

On One Hand:

Believers only avoid apostasy
because of the grace of God.

On the Other Hand:

The grace of God does not cancel
out the need for believers to exert all
of their energy to remain in God's
love.

One Commentator wrote:

**“To be conscious of
being beloved by God is
one of the greatest
protections that the
believer can possess.”**

3. “waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ”

- “waiting” is eschatological, focusing on the coming of the Lord.
- Titus 2:13 (ESV) – “waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ”
- The promise of eternal life will be realized on the day of His coming.

We Are In The Love Of God

- When we look forward to the day when Jesus Christ will show us His mercy, when He will grant us the gift of eternal life, and we will be perfected forever.
- When we take our eyes off that future hope, our love for God and our hope in His promises can wax cold.

Simply Put

Contend for the Faith.

Proclaim the Truth.

**But never get so distracted by the
evil of this world that you take
your eyes off Christ.**

Hiebert says it this way:

“The Christian life is viewed as having an inward look relating to the development of character [v. 20], an upward look relating to communion with God [vv. 20-21], and a forward look being consummated in final glorification.”

Jude 22-23

22 And have mercy on those who doubt; **23** save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

Review of our Context

- **17-19 focused on the opponents:** Jude reminded us that the apostles predicted the opponents would arrive, and that ultimately, the faith would persevere.
- **20-21 focused on believers:** He exhorted us not to keep the faith by continually fighting unbelievers but by keeping ourselves in the love of God.

3 Stages of Those Affected

1. “have mercy on those who doubt”
2. “save others by snatching them out of the fire”
3. “to others show mercy with fear”

Those Affected by Apostates

1. “have mercy on those who doubt”
 - Those who were wavering under the influence of false teachers should not be rejected or ignored.

2 Timothy 2:25

25 correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth

Those Affected by Apostates

2. “save others by snatching them out of the fire”

- Others were close to being captured by the lies of the false teachers, but their lives can still be salvaged.

Referencing Zechariah 3:2

2 And the Lord said to Satan,
“The Lord rebuke you, O
Satan! The Lord who has
chosen Jerusalem rebuke you!
Is not this a brand plucked
from the fire?”

Those Affected by Apostates

3. “to others show mercy with fear”

- Some have already been defiled, and while they may still be saved, believers should proceed cautiously.

The Most Dangerous Group

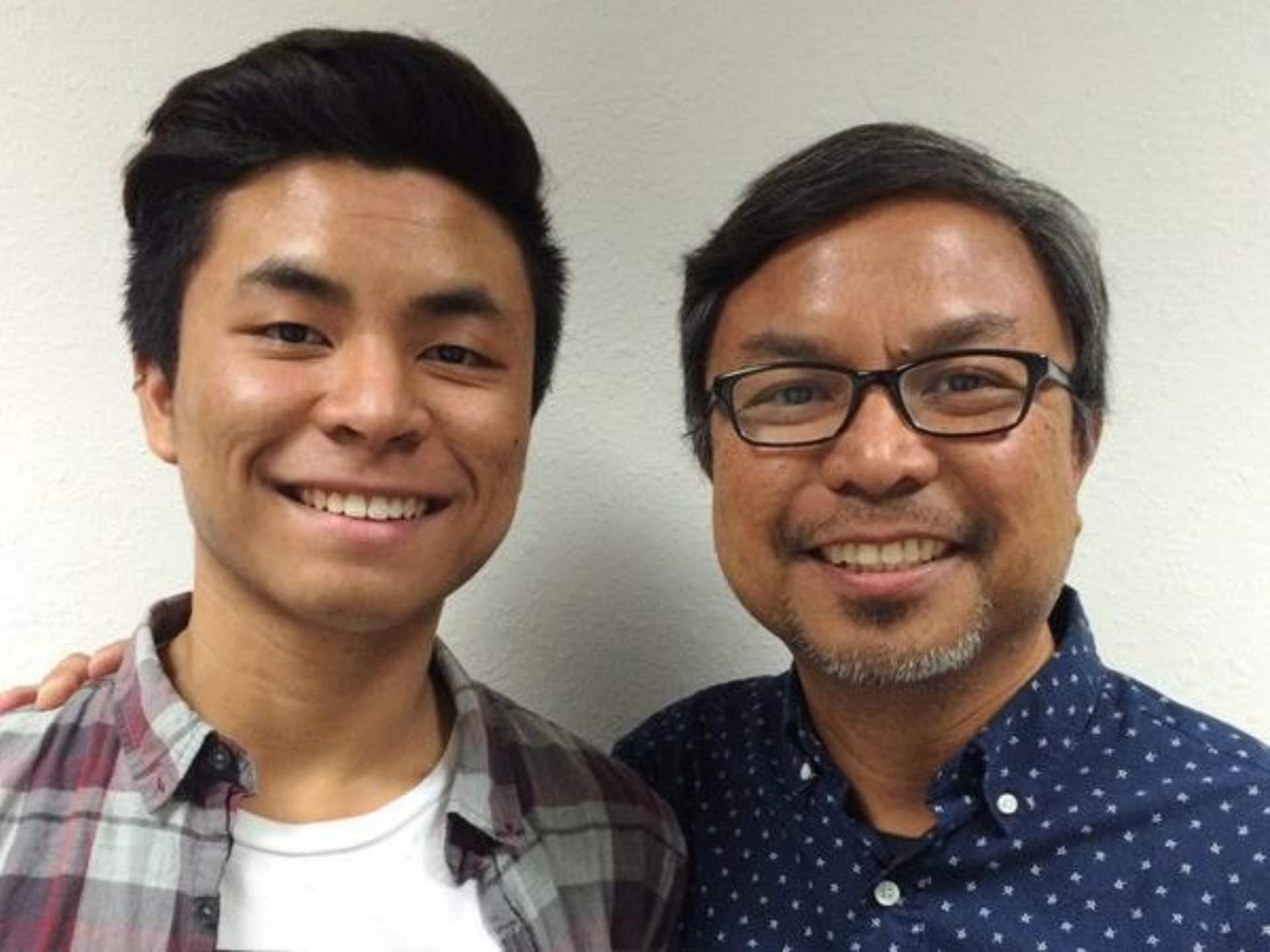
- These are people who are deeply ensnared in sin, maybe even the false teachers themselves.
- In this case, our mercy is to be mingled with fear and hatred for sin.
- Why? Because sin can contaminate a church.



The Gay Preacher's Wife

How My
Gay Husband
Deconstructed My Life
& Reconstructed
—— My Faith

LYDIA MEREDITH



Strong Imagery

“hating even the garment stained by the flesh.”

If one gets too close, even the clothing will defile those attempting to show mercy.

In the LXX, the word translated here as “stained” is the word for *excrement*.

Zechariah 3:3-5

3 Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments. **4** And the angel said to those who were standing before him, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” And to him he said, “Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments.” **5** And I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord was standing by.

The Image is Meant to Shock

But it is meant to drive home the polluting and corrupting power of sin.

And the warning for believers is to beware lest their mercy transforms into acceptance, and they themselves become defiled by the sin of those they are trying to help.

Ephesians 5:27

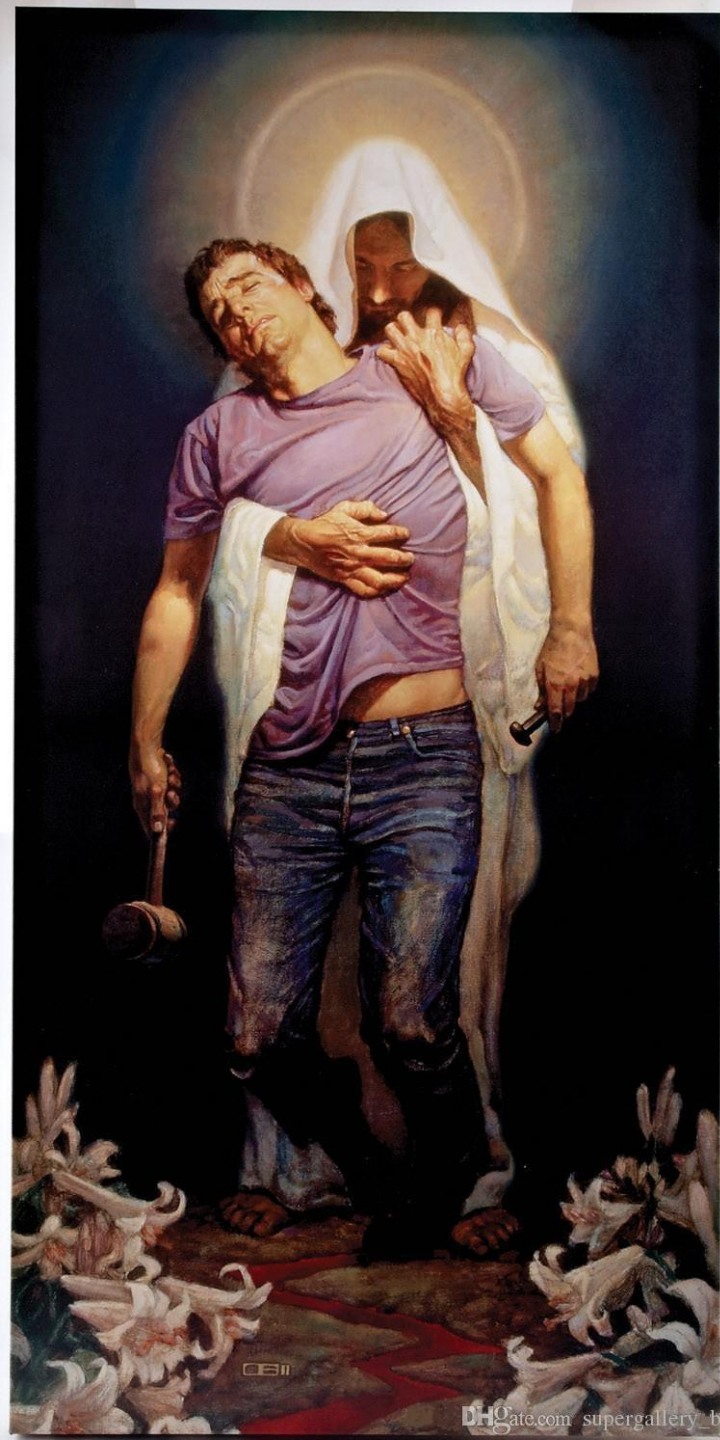
“that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.”

Philippians 2:15

“that you may be blameless and
innocent, children of God
without blemish in the midst of a
crooked and twisted generation,
among whom you shine as lights
in the world”

So, What Do We Do?

- I think it goes back to v. 20: “praying in the Holy Spirit”
- We must find the balance between showing love and mercy and maintaining standards of purity and righteousness.
- Showing love to the sinner does not exclude an intense hatred for the corruption brought about by sin.



Next Week:
Praising the
One “who is
able to keep you
from stumbling”

