

## Earnestly Contend for the Faith

### Instruction for Believers in Times of Apostasy

Jude 17-23

#### 1. Consider What You Have Been Taught (vs.17-19)

Jude has concluded his primary description of the attributes and activities of the false teachers (vs.12-16) and now offers comfort and guidance in the midst of dealing with these apostate false teachers.

##### A. Remember Who Told You (v.17)

The presence of false teachers in the visible church is a concern and a constant danger, it should not cause believers to lose heart. Jesus (Mat. 7:15-20; 24:11) and the apostles (Acts 20:29-30; 1 Tim 4:1-3; 2 Tim 3:1-5; 1 John 2:18; 4:1-3) warned of what was to come.

##### B. Remember When It Would Happen (v.18a)

The Scriptures indicate that the false teachers will come 'in the last time' or 'in the last days' (Acts 2:17 cf. Heb. 1:2; 2 Pet. 3:3). While the danger and the difficulty in dealing with error is significant, it should be a constant reminder that we are nearing the culmination of our hope (cf. Luke 17:22).

##### C. Remember What They Will Look Like (vs.18b-19)

Jude again gives a brief description of these false teachers:

###### I. Mockers.

Jude does not specify their mocking, but Peter indicates that these same men mock the idea of the return of Christ (2 Pet. 3:3-4; cf. 2 Pet. 2:1-3).

###### II. Lustful.

Lust (cf. v.16) and the central controlling aspect of carnal passions is one of the distinctive characteristics of false teachers (cf. 2 Pet. 2:13-14).

###### III. Divisive.

These men are characterized by their making divisions among the church because of their own concocted philosophies (cf. v.8).

###### IV. Natural not Spiritual (cf. 1 Cor. 2:14)

These men are characterized by their worldliness and are devoid of the Holy Spirit (cf. Eph. 1:13-14).

#### 2. Care for Yourselves (vs.20-21)

##### A. What We Are to Do: Keep in the Love of God

It true and it is supremely comforting to know that God is entirely responsible for the security of a believer's salvation (v.1; cf. John 6:37-40; 10:25-30; Rom 8:29-39). But, a believer has the obligation, both in response to God's good-

ness and in concert with His continuing grace, to actively live in such a way so as to honor and obey God (John 15:10-11; cf. Phil. 2:12-13).

#### B. How We Are to Do it:

##### I. Building Yourselves Up on Your Most Holy Faith

Building is a common analogy for depicting spiritual activity (Col 2:7; cf. 1 Cor. 3:10ff; Eph 2:20). The objective reality of the content of saving faith (v. 3; cf. John 17:17) is the foundation upon which the Christian must personally work to build upon.

##### II. Praying in the Holy Spirit

This is not an encouragement for ecstatic speech or mindless prayers (cf. Matt. 6:5ff), but it is prayer that with a fervent focus upon God, enlightened by His Word (Eph. 5:18-20; Col. 3:16 cf. Rom 8:26-27; )

##### III. Waiting Anxiously for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ

Believers have already experience God's grace and mercy in justification and are currently experiencing it in the process of sanctification; this is a reference to the culmination of the hope of the believer in the victorious return of Jesus Christ (cf. Luke 17:22; John 14:1-4).

#### 3. Concern for Others (vs.22-23)

Being able to identify the false teachings and false teachers that are in the church, Jude now encourages the believers how to interact with those who are in some way being caught up in the false teaching.

##### A. The Doubting: Patient Mercy

##### B. The Committed: Aggressive Mercy

##### C. The Polluted: Fearful Mercy