



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Jude 17-23

Jude

"Moles in the Ministry"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] We are in the Book of Jude. We have one more lesson. We're in verses 17 through 23 this morning. Jude writes:

But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you, "In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts." These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. And have mercy on some, who are doubting; save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.

May the Lord bless this reading of His word and our time of study in it together. Let's pray.

[Prayer] Father, it is a great privilege and blessing to be with Your people in Your house on the Lord's day with our Bibles open and studying Your word, considering the text of Scripture that You have revealed to Your servant, Jude. And whatever the Scripture may be, it is all Your revelation. It is inerrant, and it is what we need to read, to reflect upon, to study, to hear preached and taught. We need this constantly, and that certainly is brought before us in our text this morning. Not directly, certainly indirectly, we need to be men and women of Your word. We live

in days of trial that are no different from the days that Jude lived in. We face the same enemy with the same skill in deceiving and leading people astray, and we need to be on guard, and we need to remember the things that the apostles warned us of, and instruction that they gave. And so, Lord, I pray that You would give us that instruction this morning, that You would impress it upon our hearts, and that we would sense the urgency of what Jude has been writing of throughout this letter, but that he put special emphasis on in the text we consider this morning. Bless us. Build us up in the faith, and encourage us. This is a warning text as is so much of this Book of Jude, but there is encouragement in there, and we need that. Give us that, Father. Build us up in the faith. We thank You for the time we have together to worship and study together. It's a time when we not only reflect upon Your truth, but we do what we're doing at this moment, and that's act as priests and come before Your throne of grace with petitions, with prayers, with requests for help, as well as words of praise and thanks.

But we do pray for those who have particular needs, and there are many of them. Could go down the list of prayer requests in the bulletin, and that just covers a few. There are many, Father, who are facing difficulties, issues of health, issues of finance, just the pressures of life. You know our needs, all of the different categories, what we're facing. Some aren't facing any particular trial at this moment. That's a blessing. And yet, it comes from You, as ultimately does the trial. And things come into our life that test us and put our faith to the test with the challenge. And yet, the result of all of it is that good is produce. Use that for our good. We can't understand that at the time. It is a trial, and trials are difficult. But as we lean upon You and trust Your promises and Your word, we have that assurance, and You will bring blessing out of difficulty. Encourage those who are struggling, Father, with that, and those who are enjoying the pleasant times of life, give them the realization that that's a gift from You, and they are to be grateful. We're to be grateful on everything, and we have much to be grateful for, Father. You bless us in many ways, but the greatest blessing is yet to come, and that is the entrance into Your heavenly realm and the kingdom to come, and the world to come which is everlasting, eternal. And we have that through no work of our own, but through the work of Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank You for what He's done for us. We thank You for the future that we have, which is glorious. But we thank You also for the present we have, because

in this present time, we are secure in Him. We give You praise for that. Lord, we pray that as we sing our next hymn, You'd bless it to our souls and that You would prepare them for our time of study and reflection together, and that through our time together You'd equip us for the week to come. We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

[Message] The title of our study this morning, "Moles in the Ministry," may seem odd to those of you who are unacquainted with spy novels. The word "mole" is espionage jargon for traitor, a double-agent working for the enemy. It was coined by John le Carre in his thriller, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, which is all about finding a mole who is in the highest level of MI6, or England's CIA. Late in the novel, the problem is stated when the head of the agency, known only by the name, Control, calls in a special agent for help. It's a very dramatic scene. It's night. They sit down alone in Control's office. It's all very secret. Control trusts no one. Finally, he reveals the crisis and the reason for the meeting. There's a mole deep inside the agency. He calls him a rotten apple who's infecting all the others. They had to discover his identity. That's the mission in the fascinating, twisted tale of intrigue.

Jude is a little like that old spy master. He warns his friends that they had a mole inside their church. In fact, they had more than one who meant them harm. They were rotten apples. But he knew their identity, and he's been exposing them from verses 4 to 16 where he has told the church that these men had crept in unnoticed, just like enemy spies. He has described them as profane men, sensual men who were led by their lusts. He condemned their sin and really, in a sense, put a seal upon their doom by quoting Enoch's prophecy of judgment.

But none of this was new. Jude reminds the church in verse 17 that the apostles had alerted them to the danger and tells them to remember that, and remember what they said. Verse 17. But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. The apostles, the twelve, plus Paul, had a wider ministry than we might suppose. Their teaching and writing had forewarned the churches of heretics and the influence of these false teachers. So, the Christians Jude wrote to should have been prepared for the spiritual menace that was in their midst. But, they hadn't done the very thing that he advises them to do, and that is remember. That is so important. It is so easy to do, and yet it

is so easy not to do. The New International Version, if you have that before you, puts this a little differently, and I think with a little more force than what I'm reading from, the New American Standard Bible, which translates exhortation in verse 17 as, "You beloved ought to remember." The New International Version puts it, "But dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord said to you." Remember is an imperative. I think that's brought out a little more clearly in the New International Version. It's a command. In fact, this is the first command or the first imperative that Jude has used in the book, and maybe in his use of that, calls attention to the importance of his counsel.

Finally, he comes down to almost the end of the book, to verse 17, when he gives a command, and that is: remember things. Don't be forgetful. Recall what the apostles taught you about this very danger of false teachers and how they work, because it is real. It is an ever-present danger.

What they taught is given in verse 18. In the last days, there will be mockers following after their own lusts. That's very similar to Peter's warning in 2 Peter chapter 3 and verse 3, and maybe that's one of the texts that Jude was referring to. There's a great similarity between his book and 2 Peter, and he may have that warning in mind, as well as others when he speaks of what the apostles were saying to them and the warnings that they gave. But there in 2 Peter 3 verse 3, Peter says, "Know this," first of all, "that in the last days, mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts."

What Peter said they mocked was the Lord's second coming. Jude doesn't say that, but it's very likely that that's what they ridiculed as well, the idea that there's a judgment to come. They mocked morality. They had no concern or worry about their conduct and the consequences. Certainly, that's part of what Jude means here. They followed their own ungodly lusts. That's what Jude concentrates on in this letter, the immorality of these men. He does so more than the doctrine. It's really the immorality that he focuses upon because through their behavior, they denied doctrine. Their behavior was completely contrary to the doctrines of the Word of God.

Now, they did deny the doctrines of God's word. They did deny Christ in their teaching. They denied Christ, as he says in verse 4, that they deny our only master and Lord Jesus Christ. So, it wasn't just their behavior. It was their teaching as well. And it wasn't all that obvious, not to these people, this church. They weren't open and

brazen in all of this. They weren't open and brazen in their denial of Christ and in their bad behavior. This was all done very subtly. It's all very secretive. Jude said that in verse 4, that they crept in unnoticed. They wormed their way into the congregation. So, it's all done subtly, secretively.

But the apostles had warned about all of this. Paul had done that in Acts chapter 20 in his last face-to-face meeting with the Ephesian elders. He warned them of this very thing. He said, "I know after my departure, savage wolves will come in among you." The warning is: I'm not going to be here with you any more. He'd spent a couple of years with them there in Ephesus. And he, as a man who had great insight and understanding, could see and ferret out that which was bad from that which is good, and he could detect these things. But he's saying: I'm going to be gone. I know after my departure, savage wolves will come in among you. Not sparing the flock. And from among your own selves, men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

Jude just warned his friends in verse 16 that these heretics flatter people, and they do that for the purpose of gaining an advantage over them. So they don't come in with obvious error. They come in with flattering speech, drawing people away after them in that way. They're subtle, but they're savage. That's what Paul says. They are wolves in sheep's clothing. That's really the description that we have here as well. But what was really shocking about what Paul says, the warning that he gives, is the source of these ravenous wolves. From among your own selves, men will arise. Now, that certainly means from within the church, these people will arise. And very generally, and I can't say always it's the case, but usually that is the case. A heretic, a false teacher arises within the church as a minister. But this may also mean that from the circle of the elders themselves, this will happen. These men will be trusted men, in other words, who will be ravenous wolves. So, no wonder Jude instructed these people to remember what the apostles of our Lord said to you. These men are like moles who burrow their way into high places and do great damage.

In Jude's letter, the damage they do is largely moral. They are lustful, lewd men who seduce people. They did it with flattery, drawing unsuspecting people in in that way, and they did it by mockery. They laughed at the idea of the consequences of sin. They dismissed that as old-fashioned morality. It's puritanical. The notion of punishment for behavior is just naïve. Maybe they elaborated on the grace of God

and that we're forgiven, and that became a pretext for sin. That's happened throughout the history of the church, that people have used grace as a means of living an improper life.

It was in this way, taking the truth of God and twisting it, and doing so in a manner of learned sophistication that they learned people onto the path of their lusts. Mocking the truth is a very effective way of attacking it. It doesn't require careful reasoning. It's just dismissive of the doctrine or practice, and dismissing it as obviously foolish. No one believes that anymore. You don't really believe that, and they dismiss it as though it's foolish to believe it, and no one wants to be considered a fool.

Well, Christians get that today in regard to our belief in the Bible and various doctrines of God's word. Creationism, for example. That's mocked. We're dismissed as a bunch of Neanderthals when we believe that. Given about as much credence as the members of the flat earth society. That's a good way to dismiss what we believe, effective way to do it. To the world, to the unbeliever, our beliefs are derisible, they're laughable, and they mock the truth. But then, they always have. There's nothing unique about that to our age. It's nothing unique to the 21st century or the 20th century in that regard. It's been that way from the beginning. It's what the Ephesians did to Paul on Mars Hill. They showed a great interest in what he was teaching there at the market place, and they wanted to hear more about it, and so they gathered a group and they brought him into the Areopagus, and they listened to what he had to say, and listened, evidently, intently until he came to the subject of the resurrection, the resurrection of the body, and that was it for them. Luke says they sneered at him. They dismissed him as really not worth their time. That was the end of it.

But what should we expect? The natural man is blind spiritually to the truth of God. That's what Paul says in 1 Corinthians chapter 2 and verse 14. A natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them. And notice what he said there: he does not accept the things of the Spirit of God. Well, if he doesn't accept the things of the Spirit of God, the Spirit of God doesn't convince him, you think you and I can? Not at all uncommon to expect people to dismiss what we believe. The natural man doesn't accept it, cannot accept it, cannot understand them, Paul says.

So, what's he do? He mocks the truth. It's foolishness to him. Nothing new in that. It's been that way from the very beginning. That's the way Satan dealt with Eve in the Garden of Eden. He mocked the Word of God, and that's what these men did. This is what Jude is saying. But, the apostles warned them of this again and they warned them of this repeatedly. That's the idea of: they were saying to you over and over again, they were saying this to you over and over again. They warned of this great danger. We are in a spiritual battle. It is an invisible war. We don't actually see it unfolding, but the apostles wrote of it, and they wrote very clearly of it. Maybe the classic passage on the spiritual war that we're in, as Paul's writing in Ephesians 6 about the schemes of the devil, and the struggle against the powers of darkness, and the need for us to put on the full armor of God.

It's very clear what he's saying in that passage. There is a demonic element to this world in which we live. The world dismisses that. That's the teaching of the Word of God. In 2 Corinthians, he warns against what he calls false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. They occupy pulpits. There are moles in the ministry. They don't come in as heretics. They come in as apostles of Christ. There's a lot of teaching of the Bible involved in their false ministry.

So, moles are a problem. Now, that book that I mentioned, John le Carre's book, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, is a fiction, but it is based on fact. It's based on some events that occurred in the 1930s up through the '50s I think. It involved a group called the Cambridge Five. It's some students that were recruited out of Cambridge University by the Russians in the 1930s to spy on the West. The most notorious of them was a man named Kim Philby. They were agents of the enemy who, like moles, had burrowed deep into the organization, and they gave classified information to the Soviets. Their treachery caused the death and the misery of a lot of people early in the Cold War.

But what they did cannot compare to the mischief their spiritual counterparts caused, these false teachers. They destroyed men's souls. They draw people away from the truth and on to a path of destruction, physical, psychological self-destruction, but ultimately, eternal, spiritual destruction. And there's nothing to them. They are imposters. What they appear to be is not what they are at all. They are clever men, but they are spiritually empty. That's what Jude says when he describes them in verse

19 as worldly minded. Now, that's not, in my opinion, maybe the best translation or interpretation of the Greek word. Literally, the word is "soulish," and it means something like natural, without spiritual life. They have an animal kind of existence. They live by and they live for their appetites. They are devoid of the Spirit, Jude says. They don't have the Holy Spirit. These men are teachers who claim to have deep knowledge and spiritual maturity. The reality is, there's nothing there. They are empty. No spiritual life, nothing genuine.

And again, these kinds of men are in pulpits and pews today just as they were in Paul's day. Dr. Edwin Bloom, in his commentary on the Book of Jude writes: "The church today is plagued by false teachers claiming superior knowledge and experience. Yet, their lives are often worse than those of the average pagan." Nothing's changed from Jude's day. The enemy is the same, and our response to that enemy is to be the same as the response that Jude urged upon those to whom he wrote. We are to fight. If that seems like too strong an exhortation or instruction, to fight, to go to war, it's the exhortation that Jude gave at the very beginning of this letter in verse 3. He says that we're to contend earnestly for the faith. And what that means is: fight for the faith, fight for the truth. And in the next verses, verses 20 through 23, Jude comes back to that instruction and he tells us how we are to do that. And we're to do that in two ways. First of all, we are to guard our own souls. And then secondly, we are to rescue the souls of others. But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, meaning in the sphere or realm of God's love.

Now, how do we do that? How do we keep ourselves in the love of God, in the realm of His love? Well, we do that by keeping His commandments. That's what the Lord said. In John chapter 15 and verse 10, He said, "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love." And Jude is simply telling his friends to do what the Lord told His disciples to do: be obedient, give attention to the Word of God and obey it and follow it.

Now, back in verse 2, Jude prayed that God's love would be multiplied in them, that His love would be increased in them. He looked to the Lord to do that because that is the work of God. Love that we have for the Lord, love that we have for one another ultimately is the fruit of the Spirit. That's what Paul says in Galatians 5:22. The first list in that fruit is love. So, we seek it from Him. He produces it. It's



supernatural, ultimately. But here, Jude was urging them to keep themselves in His love, which was their side of the relationship, their contribution to it.

Our relationship with the Lord is unconditional. He inaugurated it. He began that relationship. He preserves it, and He will keep us until the very end and bring us into His eternal kingdom. Still, in all of that, we are active. We have responsibilities in that relationship. Fundamentally, our responsibility is to obey, obey God's word. Disobedience is not love. It is turning away from the Lord's love, which is what the heretics, these false teachers, did. They practiced immorality. They not only practiced it, they encouraged it. They had no love for the Lord. We love the Lord. We demonstrate our love for the Lord, the fruit of our love for the Lord is obedience. We obey Him.

Now, we enable ourselves to do that by building ourselves up in the faith. We do that by praying in the Spirit, by being men and women who devote ourselves to that. Men and women who devote ourselves to study and prayer. There will never be any growth in the Christian life apart from these two activities, of study and prayer. That takes discipline. Sometimes that takes difficult decisions. I mean, it's cutting some things out of our life that we might like to do. Maybe innocent things, maybe good things, but there's so much time in a day, and if we're going to learn God's word, we have to apply ourselves to that, and to a discipline prayer life, which is not an easy thing, I will confess. But that's what's necessary. We have to know God's word. That's what Jude refers to as our most holy faith. This is a holy faith. This is something that is to be treasured, and we are to devote ourselves to it. It is the milk and meat of the soul. It is the sword of the Spirit. It is our means of spiritual sustenance and our weapon in the spiritual battle.

So, it is crucial that we be students of God's word, continually reading it and reflecting on it, putting ourselves under the instruction of it. As we learn it, we learn of our Lord. We grow in the knowledge of Him, and that gives us an understanding of His character, of His grace and His mercy, which is also an understanding of His work, His person and His work. And as we understand all of that, that gives us a desire to obey Him.

I don't think the apostles are encouraging us to obey, or the Lord's encouraging us to obey out of a sense of compulsion, but out of a love for Him. And as we study

Him, as we learn about Him, and learn of all that He's given to us and all that He's doing for us, that cultivates within us a desire to serve Him.

When you know someone has done something good for you, has really blessed you, has been looking out for you, has done all kinds of wonderful things on your behalf and for you, your response is gratitude and you want to be a blessing to that person. As we study God's word and learn more about Christ, learn more about our Triune God, that's what's cultivated in us, and we desire to obey Him.

So, we must read and think and pray. That is essential. There's no growth in Christ apart from study and prayer, apart from fellowship, apart from seeking His help, and no victory in the spiritual battle apart from that.

The conflict with false teaching is not won by argument. Paul makes that plain in 2 Corinthians 10 verses 3 through 5 where the apostle says, "We do not war according to the flesh." In other words, we are in a war, but it's not like the wars that the world fights with iron shields and swords, or in our day, battalions and battleships and bombs and all of that. It's not material. It's as much a war as any war that has ever been fought, but it is spiritual. So, we don't fight with physical force.

Jesus made that very clear at His arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane when Peter struck the slave, Malchus, with his sword. Lopped off his ear. Jesus' response was: "Stop, no more of this." That's not our way. That's not how we fight the spiritual battle. Paul says in 2 Corinthians that our weapons are divinely powerful and they are effective in bringing down fortresses and speculations raised up against the knowledge of God. We meet error with the truth of God's word, and the Holy Spirit does His work through that. That takes, again, prayer, as well as instruction. Only the Spirit can open the eyes of the heart, to see the truth of Scripture and bring a person to faith. You can't do that. I can't do that. We can't do that with the most reasonable and fact-filled arguments that we can muster.

Now, that's not to say we shouldn't have facts. We should, and it doesn't mean we shouldn't be reasonable and logical. We should. But ultimately, this is a spiritual work, and it's a work of God. And only divinely powerful weapons can do that. Only the Holy Spirit can do that through the Word of God, and He does that in answer to our prayers, just as He makes us fit for the fight in the Christian life. He's the one that's in it all, and He's the one that gives it success and fruitfulness.

But, that won't happen apart from prayer. It won't happen apart from study, and that's what we're to devote ourselves to. That's how we're to live in the present. Often, people want to know: what's the point of prayer? They ask that question often in light of the doctrine of predestination or the doctrine of a divine, unconditional election. Well then, why pray? Because prayer is the divine means that He has given to us for obtaining the blessings that He has for us. Whether you understand that altogether or not, nevertheless, you will not gain the blessings of God if you don't pray for Him. If you're not praying according to His word.

So, we are to do that, how we are to live our life in the present. But the Christian life is also about the future. That's the fourth exhortation Jude gives. Waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. Now, that is our hope. We have to keep that before us always. The eternal life to come. One of the greatest dangers that we face, and particularly in this day and age, I think it's always been a danger for every generation of Christians, but certainly we feel it in our own day, is sensing that life is all about the present, and we neglect the future. We live for the moment as though this is really what's real and what's important. And as we do that, and we neglect the future and the promises that we have, then we begin to conform to this age and we become worldly people.

What keeps us from doing that is the hope of the life to come. This life is temporary, and very brief. You don't sense that right now? We're always living in the moment. But the reality is: time is flying by. This is a brief in which we live. It is temporary, and what we have as our hope is eternal.

Jude says we are to be looking for that, longing for that. We are to be waiting anxiously for the Lord's mercy, which is a description of His coming. He'll come with mercy for us. He's going to come as a judge. Jude has already told us that when he quoted Enoch's ancient prophecy. With many thousands of His holy ones, He's coming. He's coming in judgment. But because of the cross, because the Lord went to the cross as our substitute and bore our sins in that judgment for us, because that has been dealt with once and for all, we will receive mercy. When He comes, it's not a coming in judgment, but a coming in mercy and rescue from this age. Then we will enter into the fullness of eternal life. The life that we've only begun to experience in the present.

If you're a believer in Jesus Christ, you have eternal life right now, but you're just experiencing a bit of it. Then, we will experience it in its fullness. We will experience what Paul said. "Eye has not seen and ear has not heard things which have not entered the heart of man." Things that are beyond our comprehension. They haven't entered our heart. They haven't entered our mind because we can't comprehend them. That's how great they are. That's what's coming. That's what God has prepared for us. That's what we're to be looking for, and that gives perspective to this all too brief life, and the perspective that it gives is the importance of that, and the importance of using the time that we have, because we don't have much of it. So we're to get active in the Lord's service, and we're not to waste time in the meantime. There's lots to do. There's a fight to be fought. That's what Jude is urging on us here, to fight the good fight, to contend earnestly for the faith.

Well, we do that by guarding our own souls, by keeping ourselves spiritually. But we also engage in this spiritual warfare through service to others. That's what Jude teaches in the next verses where he urges us to help those who are drifting and those who are mired in sin.

There are three groups with each one. Their need for help gets increasingly greater. The first group is doubters. These are people who are under the influence of the false teachers and are wavering between truth and error. Jude says, have mercy on them. Don't ignore them. Take an interest in them. Deal with them patiently and kindly. Show Christian love toward them. Take them to lunch, talk with them over coffee. Spend some time with them. Show an interest and show them from the Scriptures the truth of the Christian faith.

Now, that requires a well-taught Christian to do that. It requires that we know the Scriptures and we know how to use them. It's the only way that we can help someone. Only the Word of God is going to enlighten our minds and that's what the Holy Spirit uses to enlighten other peoples' minds. It's what He uses to correct, to convict, to convince. That's why we need to know God's word. It enlightens us, but it is the weapon in the spiritual fight that allows us to win and help others be a blessing to them.

The second group are those whose situation is more dire. They need to be saved from fire. They require more direct approach, a more vigorous approach. Jude says saved them, snatching them out of the fire. Salvation is God's work, but

Christians are His agents in doing it. So, there's a sense in which we cooperate with the Lord in His work. By His grace, He uses us in that work and uses us in this way. The instruction here reminds us, at least reminds me of the brand plucked from the burning in Zechariah chapter 3 and verse 2 when Joshua the high priest is described by the Lord as a brand plucked from the fire.

The fire here that Jude is referring to here may be the burning passion of sensual desire. That word fits the context of the false teaching and the false teachers, the influence they were having, leading people in the path of their lusts. So, that may be the fire that they're snatched from, the fire of their passions. If not, then it's the fire that they are liable to if they continue in the path of error and apostasy. Either way, their situation is grave and calls for a direct approach, warning them of judgment to come.

The final group of people are the worst. They have fallen into the septic tank of the false teachers' immorality. Jude describes their clothing as stained by their corrupted flesh. Very graphic description that he gives here. This group is dangerous. They are to be handled with care, but handled nonetheless, and handled with pity and mercy. That's what Jude says. And on some, have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh. The garment that he refers to here was the inner garment that was worn next to the skin. And the picture that he gives here is one that is stained by disease, and maybe the disease of leprosy.

The law had strict rules for disposing of such garments. They were to be burned. The lesson is: there is real danger in dealing with people who are in sin. They can affect the person who's trying to help them, like an infectious disease. Be careful, is what Jude is saying. These people can be like that mole in the novel. He's a rotten apple infecting all the others. Sin and sinners have that effect. They do the same. It happens when people begin to sympathize with the sinner, when they begin to tolerate the error into which they've fallen, into the conduct in which they're engaged. And let's face it: today, we're under lots of pressure, Christians are, to wink at sexual freedom, to tolerate it, to excuse it. That is considered a loving attitude. But our ethics come from Scripture, not society. We don't save a soul by rationalizing sin. The kindest thing we can do is expose it and patiently, carefully encourage the sinner to repent.

The Lord can save the worst of sinners, but He does that with the gospel by giving a clear presentation of the gospel without compromise. And it's in spite of the mocking and rejection some get saved, and a lot get saved. That's the work of God. That's the battle that we fight. Our struggle is spiritual. It is against error and sin. It is for the deliverance and the healing of souls. It is about eternal things. And in that fight, we cannot compromise. We need to remember, constantly, as Jude instructs us, that we are in a spiritual battle, that the devil has his agents. They creep in and they have a dangerous influence like rotten apples that affect others.

So, let's remember the apostles. Let's remember their teaching, their warnings. Let us be diligent about building ourselves up in the faith, the most holy faith, studying it, and praying, and serving one another, caring for one another. Remember, Christ is coming. The time may be short. I don't set dates, but I know as every day goes by, we get closer to that day that the Lord God has set. So remember that. We must use the time that the Lord has given in His service to contend earnestly for the faith and be a service to others. But all of this, of course, is instruction and exhortation to those who are in Christ, to the believer in Jesus Christ.

And so the question we conclude with is: are you a believer in Jesus Christ? Do you put your faith in Him? We all need saving. All of us equally need saving, and we have a Savior, and He's sufficient for every one of us, and more. He's sufficient for an infinite number of sinners. That's Jesus Christ, and you have that salvation by coming to Him in faith. That's all one must do is trust in Him, and He receives everyone who does, receives them eternally, never casts them off, never loses them. You are saved from the moment you believe, through all eternity.

So, if you're here without Christ, we invite you to come to Him, and then contend earnestly for the faith, live for Him in every way for His service. May God help you to do that, help all of us to do that. Let's pray.

[Prayer] Father, we thank You for the instruction You've given us in this brief passage in Jude, a book that is brief, but it's so filled with Biblical instruction and admonition and exhortation. We could spend more time on it than we've spent. We thank You for the instruction we've given and the warning that is set forth so clearly here. We are to be a people who remember, remember the warnings that had been given, be alert to the dangers around us, but also from other portions of Scripture.

We're to remember to the goodness that You've shown us in Christ and all that He's done for us. Help us to remember that and reflect deeply upon His person and work and all that we have in Jesus Christ who has saved a people for Himself, a people who could not have saved themselves. Thank You Father for that and fill us with a heart of gratitude and a desire for service. We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.