

The Antidote For Apostasy

Jude 1:17-25

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Jude has given us a very detailed description of the apostates, specifically in verses 5-16, and I want to rehearse that for just a second. Beginning in verse 5, down to verse 7, he gave us their past judgment. He went back into the Old Testament and described how God judged those who apostatized. Then, the heart of the epistle, verses 8-13, he gives their present characteristics. We then saw their future judgment, verses 14-16.

Tonight is very significant in that beginning in verse 17 Jude takes on a new direction in his letter and moves from exposing the apostate teachers to encouraging his beloved brothers. I want you to see two key phrases. The first is in verse 17, “But, beloved,” then look at verse 20, “But ye, beloved,” that’s a very distinct change that takes place. He’s been speaking about the apostates to the believers, now he’s speaking directly to the believers calling them “beloved,” reminding them that God loves you and I love you, but he’s going to be giving them instructions on what they need to do in light of the apostates.

For many weeks we’ve studied this subject of apostasy, so what? What do we do? How do we defend ourselves? Just real quickly, to explain what an apostate is, in case you haven’t been a part of this series, an apostate is basically a false believer—a professing Christian that doesn’t really know the Lord. We’re going to see that clearly tonight in this text. An apostate is someone who professes to be a believer in Jesus Christ, but then they renounce their faith, what they believe, turn their back on Christ, and go back into the world or they embrace other doctrines that are unbiblical about Christ. It’s not about a true believer falling away and losing their salvation, it’s about a false believer—they never really were saved. Jude says they, “... having not the Spirit,” are sensual, then turn their back on Christ, and fall away from Him. Jude moves from the description of the apostates to our defense against apostasy. Someone said it’s from the anatomy of apostasy to the antidote for apostasy.

If you’re taking notes, there are four ways to guard yourself against apostasy. Here they are. First, remember the apostles predicted it so that you’re not surprised, discouraged, knocked off balance. Remember the apostles in the New Testament predicted that this would happen, verses 17-19. Follow with me as we read. Jude says, “But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; 18 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. 19 These be they,” that is, these apostates, “who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.” Jude reminds his readers that the presence of false teachers in the church were expected because the apostles actually said they would come. Remember, Jesus also predicted there would be wolves in sheep’s clothing, there would be false teachers, and the apostles also warned us as well.

In Acts 20, we saw that last Wednesday night, Paul met with the elders and pastors at Ephesus and gathered together on the beach. He said, “For I know this, that after my departing shall

grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.” He was speaking figuratively about false teachers, “grievous wolves.” Then he said, “Also of your own selves shall men arise,” out of your own midst, “speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them,” leading people astray. There were two dangers, the danger from the outside and the danger from the inside. One of the greatest dangers to the church is not from the non-Christian cults outside the church but from the professing believers inside the church that aren’t real, authentic or genuine, but are wolves in sheep’s clothing. They are “...tares among the wheat.” They are hard to detect—they look like Christians, talk like Christians, smell like Christians, act like Christians but aren’t real Christians—and all of the sudden they turn their back on the orthodox teachings of the Bible and Christ Himself and turn back to their old ways.

This was predicted also, if you’re taking notes, in 1 Timothy 4 where Paul told this pastor Timothy, his protege, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart,” there’s our word, apostatize, “from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” To apostatize means to depart from the faith. Again, even in Jude and there in 1 Timothy 4:1, it’s something that’s going to happen in the last days. In 1 Timothy 4:2, Paul says, “...having their conscience seared,” so this is what we’re witnessing and have seen happen in the church today.

Peter, the apostle, also spoke about this in 2 Peter 2. Now, I don’t have time to flip there and read that, but write that down. If you read the entire second chapter of 2 Peter, it’ll blow your mind of how graphically in detail he described these apostates who would arise in this last time. In 2 Peter 3:3, he says, “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,” or desires, the same description that Jude gives them, “And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since our fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” They will deny the concept of the coming again of the Lord and will scoff and mock at this idea of the Lord’s return.

In 1 John 2:18-19, I’m just giving you some references so that you can cross those and check those out, where John describes in the last days there will be the antichrist, and there he describes the spirit of antichrist, not the individual, the man, the antichrist, but just this anti-Christ’s Spirit that will be pervasive in the last days.

Notice, verse 18, that Jude is speaking about it here, and again, before he gives us the believer’s building program to defend ourselves, he just wants to get one last shot in there to remind us of their character and what they are like. It’s interesting that Jude was not an apostle. He says the apostles warned us. He himself wasn’t an apostle, but he warned us as well. Verse 18, “How that they told you there should be mockers,” so the apostles warned us, Jesus warned us, Jude, the brother of Jesus warns us, “...there should be mockers in the last time.” We just read from Peter where he says in the last days mockers saying, “Where is the promise of his coming?” He used the very same Greek word, and this is the only place here where that phrase “mockers” from the Greek word appears in the New Testament, “...mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts, 19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.”

Jude wants to get this last little bit of character description in there and describes them in verses 18-19. Notice what he says about them. He says they are mockers or scoffers, as I said 2 Peter uses the same phrase, and they "...walk after their own ungodly lusts," so they are many times sexually perverted, ungodly, they walk after their own sensual desires, and notice in verse 19, it says, "These be they," three things, and remember Jude kind of gives us all these sets of three, "separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." Again, in kind of a capsulated form, he makes it clear who they are.

The concept of "separate themselves," means that they create schisms and divisions, they separate themselves. Martin Luther translated it as those who make factions. Again, it only appears here in all of the Bible. It's a very unique phrase used by Jude that they create factions and divisions. It's so important to understand.

One of the things that these apostates do today is they split churches, divide churches, cause factions and divisions today in the church. They take a stand on error and those who stand for truth many times have to divide, but they're divisive, contentious, wicked, and in the flesh. They are described there as "sensual." That's one of the key phrases for these people. We get our word psychology from it, and it has the idea of soulish. It's the self-conscious life which animates their bodies. They are natural men, unregenerated, in contrast with the spiritual—those who have been born again who have experienced the work of regeneration and the Holy Spirit in their hearts.

The same phrase is used in 2 Corinthians 2:14 where Paul describes the natural man. There's the spiritual man, which is the Christian; there is the natural man, which is the non-Christian; and then there's the carnal man, which is a Christian but isn't being led, guided, or empowered by the Holy Spirit. They are "...sensual," they basically focus on the senses rather than being focused on the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. They kind of operate in the realm of their senses.

Notice what this says in verse 19, "...having not the Spirit." I'm convinced that this is a reference to the Holy Spirit. Every human being has a human spirit, but he's not talking about a human spirit, he's talking about the Holy Spirit. Again, this is basic and elementary, but I want to make sure you get this. This means that they are not Christians. This means they are not born again. This means they are not regenerated. "Born again" is kind of like the common term we use for the truth of regeneration, which means to be given new life. It means to be revived or the Holy Spirit's quickening you. It gives you life. If you're a Christian, you are because you've been born of the Spirit and He indwells you. But these apostates are "...sensual, having not the Spirit."

A Christian has the Holy Spirit indwelling them, has the Holy Spirit regenerating them, has the Holy Spirit sealing them, has the Holy Spirit filling them, has the Holy Spirit leading them, has the Holy Spirit teaching them, and the list could go on and on and on. That's the Christian life, and you can't be a Christian or live the Christian life without the Holy Spirit. It starts when He convicts you and then you trust Christ as Savior. He regenerates you, He indwells you, and He

seals you until the day of redemption. It's so important to understand that. But these have not the Spirit.

It's interesting in Ephesians 1:13-14, Paul says that the Holy Spirit has sealed us. This, again, is a neglected doctrine in the Bible. Do you know that when you're born again not only are your sins forgiven, not only are you indwelt, but I missed a point I want to make, too. The moment you're born again and indwelt and sealed by the Holy Spirit, you are also baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ, or into the church, and you become connected to Christ the Living Head. This is true of all Christians, that we've all been made to drink of that one Spirit. We all have that same position immediately in Christ, but in Ephesians 4:30, the doctrine of being sealed with the Holy Spirit says, "...whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

There's a lot of reasons in the Bible why I believe that if you've been born again you cannot be lost. You can lose rewards, you can lose fellowship with God, you can dishonor God, but you cannot lose your salvation. One of the many reasons why I believe that is because you've been sealed by the Spirit until the redemption of the purchased possession, and that seal cannot be broken. It can only be broken by God. You can't break it, the devil can't break it, and God's not going to break it. He's the sender and the receiver, it speaks of ownership and security. Many times we forget that important doctrine of sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption. When we are born again, Galatians 4:6 says, that His Spirit in our hearts causes us to cry, "Abba, Father,"—Amen?—and you become a child of God. Jude wants us to understand very clearly that these people are sensual and do not have the Spirit. They're not true believers who lose their salvation, they are professing, false believers who turn their back on Christ.

Warren Wiersbe says this, "One of the tragedies in ministry today is that some of God's people cannot discern between "soul ministry" and the true ministry of the Spirit. There is so much 'religious showmanship' these days that the saints are confused and deceived. Just as there was 'false fire' in the tabernacle (Leviticus 10), so there is 'false fire' today in the church; therefore we must exercise careful discernment." There's a difference between "soulish" sensual ministry, and a lot of times I think people drift toward the liturgical style of worship because it stimulates their senses—the smells, the sights, the sounds, the artistry. All that stimulates them instead of being spirit worship and worshipping from your heart in spirit and in truth.

There nothing wrong with being in a liturgical church, but they that worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth, not by our senses, not necessarily even by our emotions. We're emotional beings and we respond emotionally to God, but our worship needs to be spiritual of God not "soulish" or just our emotions. We need to be discerning about true ministry.

The first thing to remember is this is predicted. This will happen. Don't be naive. Don't be foolish thinking everyone who says, "Lord, Lord," is going to enter into the Kingdom. Be discerning. Now, don't be critical, judgmental, censorious and fault-finding, but be discerning biblically about truth and error.

Here's the second thing you need to do to protect yourself against apostasy, you need to build a strong Christian life or remain in fellowship with the Lord, verses 20-21, "But ye, beloved," again, the repetition, verse 17, "But, beloved," and verse 20, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves," here it is, "on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost," Spirit, "Keep yourselves in the love of God," and be "looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." This is one of my favorite sections, of my favorite sections, of my favorite sections. When you come to this little section of Jude...and this is my favorite little section of that little section. I call it the believer's building program. There are four things, write them down. First of all, you must fortify yourself through sound doctrine and the study of the Word of God. Go back with me to verse 20, "But ye, beloved," he contrasts the true believer, verse 20, with the false believer that is sensual and has not the Spirit, verse 19. But ye, beloved," this is what you need to do, step one, "building up yourselves on your most holy faith."

There are a lot of ways you can build yourself up—prayer, fellowship—but the best way to build yourself up is by the Word of God. Amen? If you want to be strong, if you want to have discernment, if you want to know truth from error, you must know your Bible. It's not enough just to come to church—and you're to be commended that you're in church on Wednesday night and you're studying the Scriptures—but it's important that you go home and on a daily basis that you read your Bible, study your Bible, know your Bible, familiarize yourself with the Word of God. How do we build ourselves up in sound doctrine? By the Word of God, "...building up yourselves on your most holy faith." "...faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

That statement, by the way, in the Greek literally means faith comes by hearing a sermon preached about Christ, and it's a response to that gospel message. As you continue to feed on God's Word, Peter says, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word," so that we, too, as well should feed on and desire God's Word. That's the best way to be built up in the Lord.

It's interesting that in the book of Nehemiah, when Nehemiah and the others were building the walls of Jerusalem and were under attack by Sanballat and Tobiah, they were on the wall and had a trowel. They were laying the block with the mortar and building the wall, but then the enemy came and they had to take the sword—with one hand they had a trowel and with the other hand a sword. This is a picture of both building and battling. It's interesting in Jude 1:3, "...earnestly contend for the faith which was once," and for all, "delivered unto the saints," that's the sword. Then, in verse 20, we have, "...building up yourselves on your most holy faith," that's the trowel.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon had a magazine for pastors. He called it *The Sword and the Trowel*, because there's the battling and the building. Sometimes people only want to battle—always attacking the enemy—but we also need to build ourselves and the body up in the Word of God. This is one of the reasons why God has ordained not just that I teach the Bible the way I do because I think it's something that I like to do, but because the Bible itself commands that it be preached this way.

When Paul said to Timothy, “Preach the word,” he was describing expositional preaching. It means herald or proclaim the Word. I believe the only preaching that is biblical is expositional preaching—you read the text, you explain the text, and you apply the text. The pastor is not up there to entertain. He’s not a motivational speaker or lecturer. He’s not a historian, he’s a proclaimer. The word actually means to herald or proclaim, so you’re supposed to preach the Word of God and do it, “...in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and,” here’s the word, “doctrine.” There’s to be doctrine in the preaching and in the teaching. This is what it means to build up the believers.

Again, going back to Acts 20 when Paul met with the elders at Ephesus who were the pastors there, he said, “...I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace,” which is the Scriptures, “which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among,” the saints. The only way to build your Christian life, this is the Christian’s building program, is to be in the Word of God.

Here’s the second thing you need to do to build a strong Christian life, you need to pray in the Holy Spirit. Notice the statement, verse 20, “...praying in the Holy Ghost,” Spirit. The first key word is “building,” verse 20; the second key word is “praying.” What does he mean by, “...praying in the Holy Ghost,” Spirit? Well, I don’t believe that it’s limited to praying in the gift of tongues. In the Pentecostal churches that I’ve experienced in my lifetime, they use that phrase for praying in tongues, and it might be that you could say, “This is praying in the Spirit,” and I have no problem with that, but it is broader and more encompassing than that.

I think the concept of praying in the Spirit means several things: It means the Spirit motivates you, the Spirit guides you, the Spirit directs you, and He guides and directs you as to what to pray, always in accordance with the will and the Word of God. If you’re praying for anything contrary to the Scriptures, it’s not being guided, empowered, or led by the Spirit, it’s just your own heart or ideas. The person who is built up in the Word, in the “...holy faith,” is going to pray properly and biblically. Many times, as you’re praying, you want the Holy Spirit to lead and guide you in your prayers biblically and praying the promises of God. To pray in the Spirit means that the Spirit of God guides and leads you in your prayers.

Notice the third thing we need to do to build ourselves up, “Keep yourselves in the love of God,” so building, praying, keeping. What does he mean by “keep yourselves in the love of God”? Let me tell you what he does not mean. He doesn’t mean that if you stumble or fall or do something wrong, God stops loving you. Wouldn’t that be a bummer? God calls you over and says, “Man, you blew it one too many times. You might as well not even read the Bible anymore or go to church because you are out. You’re out of the holy club.” Is there anything that I can do to cause God to stop loving me? No. It’s kind of like the sunshine. You know the sun is always shining, even on a cloudy day. Have you ever gone on an airplane on a cloudy day and taken off the runway? You poke through the clouds and it’s a bright, beautiful blue sky, and the sun is shining and you look down upon the clouds. So it is with God’s love. But what happens is that sin in the life of the believer can actually block the experience of God’s love. I believe that what he’s saying is live in such a way, even if you sin, you confess your sin and God “is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,” 1 John 1:9,

so that you restore fellowship.

John's epistle is not about relationship, it's about fellowship—*koinonia*—so that you can experience the warmth and the sunshine of His love. Basically, it means live in such a way that you will experience God's love. You might say, by my analogy, the warmth of God's love because if we're living in the flesh or out of the will of God, then we're not experiencing God's love. What it means is not that God would stop loving us, because God is unchangeable, His love is infinite and uninfluenceable, but it means that I want to experience God's love. I want to feel the warm sunshine of His love in my heart. I want nothing between my soul and the Savior so that His blessed face I can see. Amen? Keep that communication line open, and if there's any unconfessed sin in your life, confess it. It's so important. Don't harbor it. That's a dangerous thing. That's how it is to keep yourself in God's love. In John 15:10, Jesus said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love," and I abide with you.

Here's the fourth, verse 21, "...looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ," to come again. Under this point of building a strong Christian life, you're building yourself up in the Word, praying in the Holy Spirit, keeping yourself in fellowship with God and experiencing His love, and then, fourthly, you're looking for Jesus to come again. "Keep yourselves in the love of God," and the key word there is, "looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life," verse 21. I believe that Jude is referring here to the Lord coming for the church to take us home in the rapture. That's the purifying hope of the church—believing and expecting Jesus Christ to come again. If we really believe that Christ is coming, it should affect the way we live, the way we pray, the way we witness, what we do with our money, time, and talents. If a person is looking for the Lord, expecting Him to come, you're not going to be that slothful servant that says, "my lord delayeth his coming," and you're not going to be coming under judgment from the Lord, you're going to be ready when the Lord calls the church home to Heaven for your rewards.

Again, I believe when the rapture happens, all the church will be caught up, but there'll be some people that will be ashamed because they've lived for themselves and have no rewards before the Lord, so look for Jesus Christ to come. Titus 2:13, you know it well, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," amen? God has called us to look for His return. It's the Word of God, praying in the Spirit of God, keeping yourself in the love of God, and it's looking for the coming again of the Son of God.

The third thing we need to do, verses 22-23, is practice discernment toward the victims of apostasy. This is how we reach out. So, we remember, we remain, and we reach out to those who have been compromised by apostasy. Verses 22-23, "And of some have compassion," I think he's referring to the unbelieving world around them and those who struggle and have stumbling going on. Make compassion toward them, "...making a difference: 23 And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire," I found it interesting that we're pulling them out of the fire. The word "pulling" is the Greek word *harpazo*. It's the same word that's used for the rapture, "caught up" to be with the Lord, pulling us to Heaven. "...hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." Here's a reference to believers hating sin in another person's life, "...

hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.”

I want you to note these three categories of people we have to deal with. Those who have doubts and are, as William Barclay says, flirting with falsehood. Again, only God knows the heart, and we can't read a person's heart, but if there's somebody that's struggling with doctrine, truth, or scriptural error...not a week goes by but after I've preached here on a Sunday or Wednesday night that people come to me with questions. I can sometimes tell by their questions that they're struggling with whether the Bible is really true or Jesus is really born of a virgin or Jesus Christ is really coming again. I'm to be patient with them. I'm not just to say, "You're an apostate. Get out. Don't come back here. Remove thee hence from this property and don't come back." I'm to be patient with them.

There are some times when I give my answer, you can tell that they're not really wanting an answer, they just want to argue, and I don't have time for that. But if they're sincere and want to know the Word, I'll tell them what I believe and they can do whatever they want with it, but I'm to be patient. We're to be patient, reaching out. Those that are not grounded in the Word, not committed to the Bible and Christ-centered church or being in fellowship so they float around from church to church and they're unstable, just have patience with them. Let's have compassion on them.

The second group, verse 23, are those whose condition demands aggressive action, "And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire," so we're to be more aggressive. It's calling them to repentance, calling them to faith in Christ, exposing error, and pulling them out of their lifestyle.

The third group, verse 23b, the end of the verse, those whose pollution requires personal caution where it says, "...hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." This is probably kind of a picture of leprosy in the Old Testament where their garments would be polluted and become unclean, so those who are living in sin. All through the book of Jude, Peter, and in Paul's words, we've seen that many times apostasy also involves immorality, "...hating even the garment spotted by the flesh," so we hate the flesh and the spotting of the flesh.

A lot of so-called Progressive Christians, I don't believe they're Christians, they're just old-fashioned liberal Christians in new clothes, are very accepting of sexual immorality. We have churches today that welcome same-sex marriage, welcome the homosexual lifestyle, welcome sexual immorality, and say, "God loves you. It's okay." Yes, God loves you, but we are to hate the garments that are spotted by the flesh. When Jesus forgave the woman taken in adultery in John 8, He said, "I don't condemn you, you're forgiven; but go and sin no more." He didn't say, "Be careful. Don't get caught next time."

There are churches that celebrate—they actually celebrate—sexual immorality and encourage people to come to their fellowship. I'm fine with them coming here, but if they're professing to be a Christian and a believer in Jesus Christ and continuing to live a sexually immoral lifestyle, then the Bible also talks about church discipline. Now, that's certainly not en vogue or popular

today, but it's something that's scriptural and biblical. If a person who is an unbeliever, a non-Christian, not professing to be a Christian, comes to hear the Word of God, they're welcome, they're loved, they're accepted. But if they become a Christian and they are born again and profess to know Christ, then their life should change. If you're saved and you know it, then your life will surely show it. Amen? It will have some change. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." These are kind of the categories of those who we have to deal with, and we should be careful as we reach out.

Last, but not least, verses 24-25, we need to rest in Jesus for Him to keep me, trusting in the Lord to keep me, until He comes. Notice these four things: Remember, remain, reach out, rest in Jesus and He will keep you. This is a marvelous passage, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling," this is a closing doxology. It's amazing. The book of Jude starts with the apostates and ends with this benediction of praise and God's keeping grace. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, 25 To the only wise God our Saviour," it's a reference to Jesus Christ, "be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Amen, Amen. The only thing Jude could do is say, "So be it," or "verily," or "truly" as he closed this book.

How can we live in these last days? Answer: By trusting in, resting in, putting our faith in God's grace and mercy who is able to keep us. You don't trust in yourself, don't trust in your own strength, don't trust in your own ability. In Christianity, faith has Christ as its object. Our faith is in Christ for salvation, our faith is in Christ for sanctification, and our faith is fixed on Christ for Him to work in us and through us in Christian service. Our desire, as Jude ends this epistle, is for Him to get all the praise, all the glory, all the honor, all the power.

Notice first of all, as we break this down, that God is able. This is one of my favorite passages on the ability of God, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling." I love the references in the Bible to God's ability. There's no limit to His power. He's able to save those that come to Him, He's able to establish you, and in Ephesians 3:20, He is "...able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," and the list goes on and on and on of what God is able to do. There's no limit to His power, so look to Him.

Here are the three things that He can do, again, Jude gives us this trinity: keep you from falling, present you faultless in Heaven, with exceeding joy. It's progressional. First, He keeps you from falling. He keeps us from falling into sin and doctrinal error. I don't know about you, but as I look over the years that I've walked with God, it humbles me. I think of that hymn, Prone to wander, Prone to leave the God I love. To think that He's the Good Shepherd that loves me, comes to me, rescues me, and brings me back on the path. He gives me righteous paths, Psalm 23, to walk in. The Lord is my Shepherd. I don't know how I would've lived or survived these last many years without my Good Shepherd, My heavenly Father, My Lord Jesus watching over and keeping me. He's the One who has kept me. He's the One that will keep you, so remember verse 1 of this epistle, he called them "...preserved in Jesus Christ," it's the same concept, He's keeping you from falling.

Romans 8 opens with no condemnation, ends with no separation, and in the middle of Romans 8 there's no defeat. What begins with grace, ends with glory, so keep your focus on trusting God's grace. In John 10, Jesus said, "...and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." In John 17, Jesus said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me...that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

Notice what else He is able to do, "...present you faultless before the presence of his glory," so we are one day, as the bride of Christ, we as Christians, are going to be presented before the Lord, faultless and blameless, standing before the throne. When Paul was writing to husbands to love their wives "...as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it...That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish," the picture there is that one day we, as the bride of Christ, will be presented to Him as His bride without blemish and spot; and that's because His righteousness has been imputed to us by faith. What He did on the cross was my redemption. It was given to me, and I am righteous before Him. One day, you and I will stand faultless before the throne.

Now, I'm not faultless in my behavior, but I'm faultless in my position. The goal of the Christian life is to bring my practice up to my position and to be as holy as possible through the power of His Spirit, but one day when I get to Heaven, I've been saved, I'm being saved, and I will be saved. This is talking about going to Heaven and standing before Him complete. Trust in Him, not being an apostate, not being judged by God.

Jude closes with this in verse 24, "...with exceeding joy," I love that! Do you know that we're going to be full of joy in Heaven? We're going to have overflowing joy, exceeding joy, great joy. Heaven's not going to be a bummer. Some people say, "I don't really want to go to Heaven and sit on a cloud playing a harp, just sit around. What do you do up there?" Well, consider the other option. I'll take Heaven. I'll sit on a cloud and play a harp. There's going to be sights, sounds, loved ones, family members and friends that'll be in Heaven that we'll see. Jesus will be there. You know, the grandest, glorious thing about Heaven is that Jesus will be there—Amen?—and we'll have exceeding joy. Then Jude closes, and I won't tarry on it, "To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."