

Exhortations to Christians

Jude 20-21

Introduction:

- So far in our studies we have been walking through the darkness, but in verse 20 we turn a spiritual corner and the Lord says, “But ye beloved...”
- The best strategy against false teachers and apostates is to make sure we as God’s people are doing what’s right!
- We are called to live right in a wrong world
 - Illustr- salt and light in Matt 5:13-16
 - What happens when the salt loses its savor? Mt 5:13
 - Jesus’ high priestly prayer in John 17:14-17, Christ prayed not that we would be removed from this world, but that we would be removed from the evil in this world! If he removes us who will witness and testify of the true faith?

I. **BUILD UP**-Our spiritual growth- v. 20

- a. Build- We are responsible for our spiritual growth!
 - i. Builder- to build, to prepare establish or furnish, edify
 - ii. Signifies “to build upon” (epi- upon)
- b. The foundation is our most holy faith
 - i. Not so much our personal faith, but our heritage of faith (v. 3)
 - ii. The Faith- The body of doctrine taught in the Bible
- c. I Corinthians 3:10-15- master builders
 - i. We must be careful how we build upon our faith
 - ii. Gold = what’s done for Christ; wood= what’s done for ourselves
 - iii. People’s life amounts to just their job. Paul said: For to me to live is Christ!
 - iv. Only one life will soon be past, only what’s done for Christ will last

- d. Edify- I Thess. 5:11- Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.
- e. See also Eph. 4:12, 29

II. **PRAY IN THE HOLY GHOST-** Our prayer life

- a. Prayer- means to ask, make petition, or intercession
- b. It is not a coincidence that God exhorts us to pray after he tells us to build up ourselves upon faith. Prayer is an act of faith, committing ourselves and other matters into God's hands.
- c. Prayer should be accompanied by faith- James 1:6-7- "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord."
- d. Prayer should include praise and adoration- illustr- The Lord's Model Prayer: "Our Father..."
- e. Prayers should be according to God's will – not selfish prayers. James 4:2, 3 says, "ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." ("Thy will be done on earth...")
- f. This is an unusual phrase only occurring one other time in Scripture- Eph. 6:18
- g. If we are not praying in the Holy Ghost, then we are praying in the flesh and that is a waste of time.
- h. Everything we do should be done in the spirit- Walking in the Spirit is walking in surrender and obedience to Christ. The contrast of v. 19 and 20
- i. Romans 8:26- the role of the Holy Spirit in prayer. He assists our prayers, and enables us to pray as we should! Depending on the spirit!
- j. He ought to inspire, stimulate, and fuel our prayers!
- k. Clarence Sexton always taught, "It all begins with God"- God leads us to pray a prayer that He Himself will answer (illustr- laborers in the field)
- l. The Trinity in prayer- We pray in the Holy Ghost, to God the Father, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

- III. **KEEP UNDER**- Staying under God's love- v. 21
- a. John 15- the principle of Abiding, esp. v. 10
 - b. I John 4:19- We love him because He first loved us.
 - c. We know that God's love is unconditional- He could never love us anymore or any less. The perspective isn't, "I'm so great that even God loves me," but "God is so great that He loves even me."
 - d. Unconditional love- or what the Bible calls an everlasting love. Nothing can separate us from this love (Romans 8)
 - e. So what does this mean?
 - i. Live a life that is in harmony with the fact that God loves you. Mcgee said, You cannot keep God from loving you, but you can put up an umbrella or a roof over so that you can't feel the warmth of God's love
 - ii. The sun is always out there, always shining, but some are never in a position to receive its light or warmth. An example of this is the Prodigal Son of Luke 15, who was always loved by the father, but for a time he did not benefit from it.
- IV. **LOOK FOR**- God's mercy in Christ's return- v. 21
- a. We know from the Bible that when Jesus returns it will be a time of judgment for most- Rev. 19:11-16
 - b. But for us believers it will be a time of mercy when He takes us up to be with Him at the Rapture!
 - c. This means to eagerly anticipate- It is the same word the apostle Paul uses in Titus 2:13, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ."

Conclusion: As we have been observing on Sunday mornings in our study through I Thessalonians- anticipating Christ's coming should help us to order our lives each day! Jude exhorts us to build, pray, keep and look!