

## Sermon Littlebourne Chapel Sunday 25 August 2024

Jude 1-2, 20-25

### Introduction vv 1-2 **Motivation & calling - Why are we here?**

- Review of earlier verses included to lead up to Doxology.
- Much of Jude's letter is devoted to a warning about false teachers who have undermined the faith of believers throughout the ages.
- Today's verses from beginning & end of Jude's letter link up to underline his concern for the spiritual wellbeing of the readers.
- They coincide with the *Why are we here?* question put to Church Meeting with responses reviewed by Elders.
- God's self-giving love is at the centre of everything, as in John 3: 16. He gave His only Son for our salvation, and we can trust in Him to keep us safe from danger.
- Jude's prayer is for God's threefold blessing of mercy, peace and love to be multiplied many times over to his readers who have responded to God's call to faith.
- And when he addresses his readers, in v3 and again in v20, he uses the *agape* word again to call them *beloved*.
- Can we say, along with Jude, that our motivation and calling is inspired by God's love for all His people and Jesus' calling in the Great Commission of Matt 28: 18-20 to go and make disciples who will follow in His ways?
- Jesus is the way, the truth and the life (John 14: 6), which is why Jude is so keen to counter the influence of the false teachers who have infiltrated the Early Church.
- Are there other areas of today's society where truth is devalued and people are being led astray by emotional pressure?

### 1 vv 20-21 **How do we grow in faith in our Christian life?**

- Four key principles are given, with an emphasis on **love** which is the only one that uses the imperative form of the verb.
- We are to **keep** ourselves in **the love of God**, just as Jesus **keeps** us safe in v1.
- This message forms part of Jesus' final message to the disciples in John 15: 9-10:  
"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in His love."
- We keep ourselves in God's love through prayer and worship, fulfilling our purpose "To glorify God and enjoy Him forever".
- We do this by actively **building ourselves up in our most holy faith** so that we are strong enough to counter any false teaching. Our faith is built up when we read, study and meditate on the Word of God on a daily basis for ourselves at home and together as we meet in church. Our lives will be changed as we increase in wisdom and respond in obedience.
- The Word of God and prayer go together in spiritual growth. By **praying in the Holy Spirit**, we draw close to God who softens our hearts and applies His Word to our lives in a life-changing way. He also puts thoughts and pictures into our minds and shows us how to pray into His will for His kingdom to come. We draw close to Him and have a sense of His presence with us.
- We should live our lives "**waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ** that leads to eternal life". When troubles assail us and our very lives are threatened, we can have a peace that passes all understanding because we know that our future is secure, thanks to our Redeemer, and we will have everlasting joy in His presence.

## 2 vv 22-23 How are we to show mercy?

- Just as God has shown mercy to us, it is part of our Christian calling to show mercy to others who are in need of help, in particular to those who are being led astray by false teachers or worldly distractions. The first group are those who are hesitating or wavering because they lack a sound foundation to their faith. They need to know the love of God through the warmth of the fellowship and the relevance of the teaching from the Word of God. **How can we encourage those who have doubts or are not yet fully committed?**
- The second group are those who have turned away from the true faith, either by following false teachers or by abandoning their search without making a commitment to follow Jesus. We are called to follow them up actively and engage them in serious discussion to show them that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.
- The third group have strayed further from the truth and have engaged in unrestrained sexual sin. In that case, they are to be shown mercy with fear, as we are at risk of being defiled by their ungodly talk and practices. Only God can save them, but it is up to them to turn away from their sinful ways.

## 3 v 24 **God's promise to believers**

- Jude ends his letter with a threefold covenant promise of God's commitment to us, His children. Firstly He will watch, guard and keep us from falling away, through all the trials and temptations of life.  
Psalm 34: 7 "The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and He delivers them".
- Secondly He promises to present us blameless and unblemished before the presence of His glory through the perfect sacrifice of Jesus.  
Eph 1: 4 "For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight."  
The mission of Jesus is to present us to God blameless, clothed in His righteousness – an amazing promise!
- Thirdly, when we are brought into His presence it will be with exuberant joy and exultation.  
Zeph 3: 17  
The LORD your God is with you,  
the Mighty Warrior who saves.  
He will take great delight in you;  
in his love he will no longer rebuke you,  
but will rejoice over you with singing."

## Conclusion v 25 Our prayer of praise to almighty God

- God is our Saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord
- We acknowledge His glory,
- His might or majesty
- and His authority
- before all the ages
- now and forever
- Amen
  
- Job 19: 25-27  
I know that my redeemer lives,  
and that in the end he will stand on the earth.  
And after my skin has been destroyed,  
yet in my flesh I will see God;  
I myself will see him  
with my own eyes—I, and not another.  
How my heart yearns within me!
  
- The words of a song, eg SoF 520:  
*Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord*