

## The protection from apostasy

### Jude 20-25

Jude has been pounding away the warning about apostates within: What happened to make them that way, what they look like in action, and the results of their "ministry", and what their destiny will be. Now he turns his attention to his beloveds, his dear brothers and sisters with the what and the how of protecting themselves from the apostates.

V20, The "WHAT", the first of several commands that are the "how to's" thru v21:

But you, beloved" By contrast he distinguishes his dear readers from the false teachers. "in your most holy faith" this points back to v3! As God's fortress temples under siege by hostile enemy forces, we need to "build both our ourselves and one another up," to "strengthen ourselves and one another on [our] most holy faith"—by knowledge applied spiritually (Eph. 2:20-22; 2 Pet. 3:18).

*"The best thing believers can do to withstand the malady is to develop their spiritual immunological resources." -Duane Litfin*

To pray in the Spirit is to pray in agreement with the revealed will of God.

V21a, We should "keep" ourselves, or maintain our mind and heart in the sphere of "God's love" (vv. 1, 6, 13; cf. John 15:9; Rom. 5:5; 8:39). When we depart from His Word and His will, we throw up walls between ourselves and the fellowship of God—thus blocking our enjoyment and awareness of the free flow of His love to us. We "keep" ourselves "in (His )love" by *abiding* in Him (John 15:9-10; 1 John 2:28).

*"To be conscious of being beloved by God is one of the greatest protections that the believer can possess" -Alfred Plummer*

V21b, "waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life." This is none other than the Blessed Hope of the rapture, the snatching up of the saints. (Titus 2:13, 1 Thess 4:17) To have this hope of the rapture as a primary motivator of faithfulness is rewarded at the Bema seat of Christ: (2 Tim 4:8)

V22-23, They were to tenderly help ("have mercy on") those of their fellow believers who were struggling, and perhaps stumbling, under the influence of the false teachers. Those in view "who are doubting" are earnest doubters who sincerely cannot decide between truth and error. They are wavering in their loyalty. We should not abandon these brethren, but compassionately seek to restore them.

v.23, Those believers who had already fallen under God's discipline by capitulating to false teachers. We should attempt to extract ("save") them from their error before their consequent judgment falls (cf. Amos 4:11; Zech. 3:2). "Fire" is symbolic of God's judgment in Scripture. Here Jude saw God's temporal and Bema judgment coming on believers for yielding to sin or false teaching. And he also saw it coming on unbelievers. For those whom heresy has completely swept away, have *pity* on them, rather than condemning them without compassion. Moreover, we should regard them "with fear," *not fear of being infected by physical contact with them, but fear of falling under God's displeasure and discipline* if we embrace their error. We should avoid any contact with these people because of the corrupting influence.