

Mercy Me

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[0 : 00] 17 through 23 of the book of Jude. Keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

And have mercy on those who doubt. Save others by snatching them out of the fire to show others mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by flesh. Thank you, Kara.

Let's pray together. Father, we count it a privilege to have your word. Father, we count it a privilege to be in a place gathered for worship, to have a safe place where we can gather this morning without fear.

We count it a privilege to have brothers and sisters with us so that we're not worshiping alone, but we're worshiping together and joining our voices with those around the world who gather on this first day of the week.

In remembrance of the resurrection and ultimately in worship for you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Thank you for the privilege of coming before you in worship.

[1 : 42] Thank you for the privilege of being called into worship by our brothers and sisters who have served us this morning in leading us in music.

We are so grateful for all your many good gifts as it relates to our time of worship. Father, we are so grateful for your word. And as we turn our attention now to the preaching of it, we ask that you would give us ears to hear.

Give us minds that are prepared to listen. Give hearts that are inclined to believe the things that we find written here for us.

Would you give us consciences that are quick to repent? And would you encourage us in the ways of obedience as we seek to be faithful to what we find here in this last portion, Jude 17 through 23. Father, we ask this because we believe that it will be for your glory and also for our good. Holy Spirit, please keep me from foolishness and error.

[2 : 56] Guard my mind and my heart and my mouth so that I say those things that are most profitable, most proper, most appropriate for lifting up our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is in his name that we pray and give thanks. Amen. Amen. Group projects are hard.

Group projects are hard. Maybe this goes all the way back to the Tower of Babel. People bring different mindsets, different work ethics, different timelines, different priorities, different goals, different expectations.

Perhaps you're one of those who feels the pressure of the group project and you want the group to, you know, come together and coalesce and rally around the mission.

You want the project done right. Or maybe you are one of those who is sending out memes to the group and ignoring group chats and missing your deadlines and causing the team, the group to fall behind.

[4 : 13] Some of us will do whatever it takes to keep a group focused and moving forward. And we feel the pain of that sometimes, don't we? Others of us are content to ride along and hope that it all just works out.

But either way, dysfunctional teams breed frustration and mistrust and eventually failure.

Through our study of Jude, we have been reminded that God keeps his people. We are kept by God.

But here at the end of the letter, Jude shows us something surprising. God keeps his people through his people.

Now, for followers of Jesus, like us, living in the time between his resurrection and his return, the stakes couldn't be higher.

[5 : 22] Creepers have crept in. They are peddling a perverted gospel. They are denying the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jude pivots from his intended topic so that we hear the sound of sirens.

Contending is not optional. It's urgent. And here in this most vital of all group projects, the church. The church finds itself under pressure from doubt. Under pressure from deception. Under pressure from division.

But God's plan is not to extract the faithful out of the church. His plan is to activate the faithful for ministry within the church.

God keeps us, you see. Through the patient, gritty, mercy-filled love of a community of believers who just stubbornly refuse to give up on one another.

[6 : 39] God's plan for keeping you requires his people. You are kept. God keeps us.

But not without you. Look at verse number 17. But you must remember, beloved.

The predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you, in the last time, there will be scoffers following their own ungodly passions.

When I hear that word scoffer, I can't help but think back to the text that we looked at not all that long ago in 2 Peter chapter 3.

There, Peter writes this. Scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing. Following their own sinful desires.

[7 : 39] And that's not the only place we hear Peter write this warning. Peter writes it earlier in chapter 2 as well. There he writes this. There will be false teachers among you.

Who will secretly bring in destructive heresies. Even denying the master who bought them. Bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

And Peter is just echoing the words of the Lord Jesus from Matthew 24. Verse 11. Many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.

Or verse 24. For false Christ, Jesus says, and false prophets will arise and will perform great signs and wonders so as to lead astray.

And the apostle John in chapter 4. Verse 1. Many false prophets have gone out into the world.

[8 : 47] And in one of my favorite portions in the book of Acts, Paul commissions the Ephesian elders with these sober words. Verse 29.

I know that after my departure, fierce wolves will come in among you. Not sparing the flock.

And from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things to draw away the disciples after them.

What a striking parallel to the situation that Jude addresses. These scoffers are not outside the church.

They have crept into the church. Bringing with them ungodly desires for power. And for control. And for recognition. Maybe they're driven by envy.

[9 : 44] Maybe they're driven by fear. But the result is the same. Verse 19. It is these who cause divisions.

Worldly people. Devoid of the spirit. Remember what Jude told us back up in number 16.

You can look back there at verse 16. These people are grumblers. They are evil. They are evil.

They are malcontents. They are arrogant boasters.

They will show favoritism to gain an advantage through their words. Their narcissism. Their manipulation. They cause division among God's people.

They are members of the church community. But they are worldly. Their lives contradict the gospel.

[10 : 47] They participate in the Lord's Supper. With fearless hypocrisy. Rather than reverent humility. And then Jude drops this chilling line at the end of verse 19.

They are devoid of the spirit. Devoid means that you don't have what is expected.

Or what is needed. What is usual or typical is missing. If you walk into the donut shop and all you see are a bunch of yellow trays.

Sandy's is devoid of their donuts. You're expecting them. That's what they need to have. That would be usual and typical.

What is expected, needed, usual, and typical of a believer in Jesus? Well, it's the presence of the Holy Spirit.

[11 : 58] Jude says, they are not just immature. They are not merely misguided. They are spirit-less.

And I think that ought to sober us. They don't just cause confusion. They cause division. They aren't just fruitless, like we saw last week. They are dangerous. This isn't hypothetical or in theory.

Their impact is real and is already being felt within the community. Just glance down at verse number 22. We'll come back to it. But just glance down there.

And notice, three groups of people. Some are doubting. Some have been deceived. And some have joined in with the false teachers in denying the Lord Jesus.

[13:02] following the twisted scripture and the ungodly example of those who are devoid of the Spirit.

Some are doubting. Some are deceived. And some have become deniers. This danger is real. Jude exhorts God's people to action. Shifting his attention from the scoffers to the saints. From those who are causing this division.

To those who are to contend for the faith. Look at verse 20. But you. But you, beloved. If you're taking notes, notice that tension.

Notice this contrast. It ends verse 19. Those who are devoid of the Spirit. But not you, beloved. Not you.

[14:02] But you, beloved. Building yourselves up. In your most holy faith. And praying in the Holy Spirit.

Keep yourselves in the love of God. Waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. That leads to eternal life.

There's just one imperative in this chunk of two verses. And the imperative is in the middle. Keep yourselves in the love of God.

That's the imperative. That's the command to the beloved. Now you may be thinking, wait a minute. I thought you said that God was keeping us. And you're right. He is.

[15:09] Verse number one. We are the called. Those who are loved by God the Father. And kept by God the Father for Jesus Christ.

But listen very carefully. God's preservation of his people. Does not cancel their calling to persevere.

God's preservation of his people. God's preservation of his people. So how do we keep ourselves in the love of God? If this is the command for us.

For those who consider themselves the beloved. How do we keep ourselves in the love of God?

Well I want you to notice. Jude does not present this as some sort of mystical.

Or magical. Or automatic thing. He gives three means of perseverance.

[16:05] Three ways that we actively stay rooted in God's love. First. Building yourselves up.

In your most holy faith. Do you remember back in verse 3? Jude says. You are to contend for the faith. What is the faith? It is the body of truth.

That is centered in the person. In the work of Jesus. His words. His ways. The body of truth. That is anchored in his life. And his death.

And his resurrection. You might summarize it by saying. The faith. Is the gospel. As our knowledge of Jesus grows.

Our faith matures. And we become more resilient. To temptation. More resistant. To false teaching.

[17:07] More deeply rooted. In God's love. The second way. Praying in the Holy Spirit.

This is our second means. For building ourselves up. For keeping. Sorry. For keeping ourselves. In the love of God. Why does it matter.

To pray. In the Holy Spirit. Because your relationship. With Jesus. Is not built. Merely. On your. Head knowledge. It's not just about. What you know. About Jesus. In your. Head. God. It's not enough. To know about him.

Or even be able. To teach others. About him. You must. Know him. Personally. Relationally. And that relationship.

[18:04] Is nurtured. By prayer. What grace is this? That we are.

Commanded. To keep ourselves. In the love of God. And one of the means. By which we do it. Is simply. To go before. The throne of grace.

In prayer. To bring. Our worship. Our intercession. Our supplication. Our thanksgiving.

To bring it all. Before. Our father in heaven. Praying in the Holy Spirit. Is not about style.

It is not about. A specific set of words. It's not about volume. It's about dependence. It's prayer. That is marked.

[18 : 59] By the Holy Spirit's presence. Prayer that. Is aligned. With God's. Will. Praying.

In the Holy Spirit. Spirit. Finally. We keep ourselves. In the love of God. By waiting. For our. Blessed. Hope. Waiting. For Jesus's. Return. The glorious. Appearing. Of our great God. And Savior. Jesus Christ.

As Paul. Writes. To Titus. And when Jesus returns. Jude says. You're going to need. Mercy. Now that's an interesting thought. I think for us.

Why would we need mercy. When Jesus returns. Well we need mercy. Because we remember. That we are not perfect yet. And we won't be.

[19 : 57] Not until Jesus. Returns. And so on that day. When he returns.

It's mercy. Again. That we will need. As we are made. Perfectly. And completely. And fully. Like our Savior. The Lord.

Jesus Christ. On that day. When he appears. We will be made like him. And we will enter into. The eternal life. That God has graciously. Given us. My brother. My sister. You will not keep yourself.

In the love of God. When your heart. Is immersed. In this world. When your desires.

[20 : 55] Are shaped. By this world's values. This world's habits. This world's headlines. You will not keep yourself.

In the love of God. When your affections. Affections. And emotions. Are more stirred. By news feeds. Than by God's promises.

To you in Christ. But if you still hope. For the day. When Jesus returns. If you still pray. Believing that God. Hears and supplies. Sufficient grace. For every single need. If you desire. To grow your relationship.

With Jesus. Through a deeper. And deeper. Understanding. And appreciation. Of the gospel. Then you are keeping yourself. In.

[21 : 52] The love of God. God. And much like. How you must. Put on your own mask. You know. If you're flying in an airplane. I hope this hasn't happened to anybody here.

But if you're flying on an airplane. And suddenly the cabin loses pressure. They will say. You need to. Put on your own mask first. Don't help anybody else. Until you have first.

Put on your own mask. Jude does something similar here. He gives us what we need first. We need to keep ourselves.

In the love of God. By building ourselves up. In our most holy faith. By praying in the Holy Spirit. By waiting expectantly. For the return.

Of Jesus. But now. Having realized. These things. We are spiritually equipped. To participate. In God's plan. His good plan.

[22 : 47] To keep. His people. And Jude brings us. Right to the heart of this plan. In verse 22. Have mercy.

On those. Who doubt. Save others. By snatching them.

Out of the fire. To others. Show mercy. With fear. Hating.

Even. The garment. Stained. By the flesh. Life is hard.

Persecution. May. Be painful. False teachers. May be. Persuasive. And in the face.

[23 : 46] Of this. Division. This. Stirring. Confusion. Within. The church. Community. Some. Have begun. To waver. And they're asking.

Is following Jesus. Really worth it? Is it worth it. To follow Jesus? Jude says. Be patient.

With them. Keep a soft heart. Towards them. Don't offer quick fixes. Or shallow platitudes. Give them the gospel.

Have mercy. On those. Who doubt. Others have gone further. They have moved from.

Doubt. To deception. They've bought into this. Perverted gospel. Of those who have crept in. Unnoticed to the church. A version of grace.

[24 : 45] That requires. No holiness. And promotes. Ungodliness. They've been drawn away. From the faith.

Once for all. Delivered to the saints. They stand. On a dangerous. Edge. Edge. But Jude encourages us.

That their faith. May still be salvaged. Don't give up on them. Figuratively speaking. Snatch them out. Of the fire of hell. Before it's too late. Rescue those. Who are. Deceived. And then. Jude seems to identify. A third group of people. Those who have moved from.

[25 : 43] Doubt. Through deception. And have now. Themselves. Become deniers. Like the false teachers. What should we do with these?

What should we do with these? Who are now following. Those who are worldly. Those spiritless leaders. Jude's instruction here is careful.

Show mercy. With fear. Hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

Yes. Yes. Yes. Even with these who have moved from doubt through deception. And are now full on part of the division.

Even to these. Even to these. Jude says. Show mercy. But don't be naive. Show mercy.

[26 : 44] But don't be led astray. Be careful that you do not begin to doubt. That you do not become deceived.

Show mercy. Show mercy. Show mercy. But hate. Their sinful ungodliness. Wisdom.

To discern. Is necessary here. Isn't it? We need to discern. Who are those who are doubting. So that they receive.

Gentle mercy. We need to discern. Those who are deceived. So that they receive. Urgent mercy. A rescue.

We need to discern. Those who are deniers. So that they receive. Cautious mercy. In each case.

[27 : 47] Mercy. Is the method. And you. Beloved. Yes. You. You are the means.

Mercy is the method. And you. Are the means. Jude. Ends. The body of his letter.

With this. Compelling call. To the church. First. Keep. Yourselves. In the love of God. How? By maturing. By maturing. In the gospel.

By praying. In the Holy Spirit. And waiting. With hope. Second. Jude says. Show mercy. Show mercy.

To those who doubt. Show mercy. To those who are deceived. Show mercy. To those. Who have begun. To deny.

[28 : 40] God's plan. God's plan. For keeping. Requires. His people. God keeps us. But not.

Without. You. So let me ask. Will you mercy.

The doubters. Will you mercy. The deceived. Will you mercy.

The deniers. Will you. Mercy. Me. Don't leave me.

In my doubt. For long. Please. Don't turn away. From me. When you suspect. That I have been.

Deceived. Don't abandon me. In my sin.

[29 : 41] Mercy me. Don't pretend. That it is all. Going to be okay. Don't give me. Some kind of a performance. Don't.

Recite. Platitudes. Give me the gospel. Give me Jesus. Point me. To the lamb. Of God.

Slain. From before. The foundation. Of the world. Remind me. Again. And again. And again. That he himself. Bore. My sins. In his body.

On the tree. Tell me. That Jesus. Broke. The power. Of sin. By rising. From the dead. Crushing. The devil's head.

Help me. Remember. That because of his. Faithful. Intercession. There is. Now. No.

Condemnation. For those.

[30 : 33] Who are in. Christ. Jesus. When life. Is unfair. When friends. As we sometimes sing.

Despise. And forsake me. When shame. Threatens. To overwhelm me. Will you keep my eyes. Fixed. On our blessed hope.

Will you. Mercy. Me. In the film.

Adaptation. Of the fellowship. Of the ring. There's a scene. Towards the end. When Frodo. Has decided. That he must. Leave the fellowship.

Behind. For their own safety. And he must. Go alone. Into Mordor. To destroy. The one ring. Samwise Gamgee.

[31 : 35] Sees him. Slipping away. And he chases. After him. Into the river. And Frodo. Says. I'm going. To Mordor.

Alone. Alone. And Sam. Says. Of course. You are. And I'm coming.

With you. This is the kind of church. That God calls us. To be. This is the kind of church. That we need to be. I hope. Brothers and sisters. This is the kind of church. We want to be. For our own. Sakes. The church.

The most vital. Of all. Group projects. And we believe. That the gates of hell. Will not prevail. Against her. And yet. We remember. That she is often.

[32 : 32] Threatened. By doubt. By deception. And by division. God does not. Extract.

The faithful. From among them. He activates them. As conduits. Of his mercy. And so. We are kept. Not in isolation. But in community.

Not merely. By our diligent. Efforts. To keep ourselves. But by the mercy. Of our brothers. And sisters. In the faith.

We are kept. By the mercy. Of God's people. Reminding us. Of the gospel. Pulling us back. From the edge. Of destruction. Urging us.

To repent. When we. Have embraced. A perverted gospel. That denies. The Lord Jesus. God's plan. For keeping. Requires.

[33 : 28] His people. God keeps us. But not. Without you. So let's respond.

With. Repentance. And with faith. And with obedience. Not because. We are so clever. Not because. We are so capable. Or spiritual.

Or merciful. But because. We are confident. That our God. Is able. To keep us. From. Stumbling. And to present. Us blameless. Before the presence. Of his glory. With great joy. Let's pray. Father. Thank you again. For the kindness. That you have shown us. In giving us. The privilege. Of gathering together. Father. Would you please. Stir our hearts.

[34 : 26] With fresh. Reminders. Of the beauty. Of our Savior. The Lord Jesus Christ. And the work. That he finished.

On the cross. The full atonement. That he made. The crushing. Of our adversary. The devil. That he. Accomplished. By his resurrection.

Lord Jesus. Thank you. For your. Your intercession. For us. For us. For us. Thank you. For keeping us. We are looking forward.

To the day. When you return. On that day. We ask that you would give us mercy. And we will celebrate.

In entering into. The joy. Of the Lord. And we will enter into eternal life. Forever with you.

[35 : 25] What a day that will be. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit please keep us until then please preserve us in faith until then please help us to persevere in your grace until then we love you and we are grateful to be your people in Jesus name we pray Amen