

His Mercy is More

Jude

A 21 day

prayer & fasting

Devotional

January 3-23, 2021



WHY YOU SHOULD FAST

If you do not already know of the power and importance of fasting, here are some very important facts:

- Fasting was an expected discipline in both the Old and New Testament eras. For example, Moses fasted at least two recorded forty-day periods. Jesus fasted 40 days and reminded His followers to fast, “when you fast,” not if you fast.
- Fasting and prayer can restore the loss of the “first love” for your Lord and result in a more intimate relationship with Christ.
- Fasting is a biblical way to truly humble yourself in the sight of God (Psalm 35:13; Ezra 8:21). King David said, “I humble myself through fasting.”
- Fasting enables the Holy Spirit to reveal your true spiritual condition, resulting in brokenness, repentance, and a transformed life.
- The Holy Spirit will quicken the Word of God in your heart and His truth will become more meaningful to you!
- Fasting can transform your prayer life into a richer and more personal experience.
- Fasting can result in a dynamic personal revival in your own life—and make you a channel of revival to others.
- Fasting and prayer are the only disciplines that fulfill the requirements of II Chronicles 7:14: “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

If you fast, you will find yourself being humbled as I did. You will discover more time to pray and seek God’s face. And as He leads you to recognize and repent of unconfessed sin, you will experience special blessings from God.

HOW TO PREPARE YOURSELF SPIRITUALLY AND PHYSICALLY

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

In preparation for this special time with God, I strongly urge you to examine your heart, and detect any unconfessed sin. Scripture records that God always requires His people to repent of their sins before He will hear their prayers. King David said:

“Come and hear, all of you who reverence the Lord, and I will tell you what he did for me: For I cried to him for help, with praises ready on my tongue. He would not have listened if I had not confessed my sins. But he listened! He heard my prayer! He paid attention to it! Blessed be God who didn’t turn away when I was praying, and didn’t refuse me his kindness and love.” (Psalm 66:16-20)

In your prayers, confess not only obvious sins, but less obvious ones as well. The sins of omission as well as the sins of commission experiences. These may be experiences leaving your first love for our Lord: worldly-mindedness, self-centeredness, spiritual indifference, and unwillingness to share your faith in Christ with others, not spending sufficient time in God's Word and in prayer, a poor relationship with your spouse, your children, your pastor, or other members of your church.

Another great way to prepare for your fast is to practice what I call "Spiritual Breathing." The concept is simple, but it has changed my own life and that of millions of others.

Like physical breathing, Spiritual Breathing is a process of exhaling the impure and inhaling the pure. If you knowingly sin, breathe spiritually to restore the fullness of God's Holy Spirit in your life. You exhale by confessing your sins immediately when you become aware of them, and you inhale by inviting the Holy Spirit to re-take control of your life. As an act of faith, trust Him to empower you. During the fast, spiritual breathing—constant reliance on the Holy Spirit—will enable you to resist temptation, not only to sin but to abandon your fast.

Types of Fasts

While preparing for your fast, it is important to choose ahead of time what type of fast you will participate in. Not only will this help with making the necessary preparations to implement your plan, but as you commit to a specific fast ahead of time, and know how you're going to do it, you will position yourself to finish strong.

Choosing your fasting plan is a very personal decision. We are all at different places in our walk with God and our spirituality should never be a cause for comparison or competition. There is nothing more "inherently spiritual" about one type of fast as opposed to another. Your personal fast should present a level of challenge to it, but know your body, know your options, and most importantly, seek God in prayer about this and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do. It's also important to not let what you eat or *do not* eat become the focus of your fast. This is a time to disconnect enough with your regular patterns and habits in order to connect closer to God.

Listed below, are some options and variations of different types of fasts you can choose to engage in. As you read over the information provided here, please consider how it applies to your circumstances and convictions. Fasting does require reasonable precautions. If you have any health concerns, please consult your physician prior to beginning your fast – especially if you are taking medication, have a chronic condition, or if you are pregnant or nursing.

Specific Food or Activity Fast

This type of fast refers to omitting a specific item(s), activity or habit from your time of prayer and fasting. For example, you may choose to eliminate red meat, processed or fast food, or sweets. It could also involve fasting from an activity or habit, such as television watching, or social media.

How To Get Started on Your Fast

Having a successful fast starts with the right preparation. It is important to choose ahead of time what type of fast, or what combination you will pursue. Not only will this help with making the necessary preparations to implement your plan, but as you commit to a specific fast ahead of time and know how you're going to do it, you will position yourself to finish strong.

Here are a few easy steps to get you started:

1.) Set Your Objective

Begin by deciding why you are fasting. Is it for spiritual renewal, for healing, for wisdom in a particular area, or the resolution of a specific issue? Pick the top 1-3 prayer requests or things you would like to seek God on. Don't overwhelm yourself and make a laundry list of items. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in deciding and clarifying your goals for fasting.

2.) Choose Your Plan

We are all at different places in our walk with God. Likewise our jobs, daily schedules, and health conditions are all different and place various levels of demand on our energy. So most importantly, whether you've fasted before, or this will be your first time, prayerfully consider what your fast will look like.

Your personal fast should include a level of challenge to it, but it's very important to know your own body, know your options, and most importantly, seek God in prayer and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do. Remember, the goal of fasting is not just to do without food. The goal is to draw nearer to God.

Note: A couple of sample menus are attached to help you.

3.) Choose Your Fasting Schedule

You may choose to fast all or several days out of the 21 days, such as, 3 or 4 days a week or specifically on Sundays and Wednesdays. Maybe you will do that, and end with 3 to 7 consecutive days at the end. This is your personal decision, and again, should be prayerfully considered as it applies to your circumstances. Just plan ahead.

4.) Begin and Break the Fast Well

Depending on the type of fast you choose, it is very important to prepare your body ahead of time before beginning the fast. Take a week or so to transition into your fast; otherwise, you could get sick. For example, if you would like to go on a fruits and vegetables or juice fast, start ***Important Note: Fasting requires reasonable precautions. If you have any health concerns, please consult your physician prior to beginning your fast, especially if you are taking medications, have a chronic condition, or are pregnant or nursing a baby.***

How to Maintain Nutritional Balance and Health from Beginning to End (*Suggestions from Bill Bright*)

I know the prospect of going without food for an extended period of time may be of concern to some. But there are ways to ensure that your body is getting the nutrients it needs so you can remain safe and healthy during your fast.

For an extended fast, I recommend water and fruit and vegetable juices. The natural sugars in juices provide energy, and the taste and strength are motivational to continue your fast. Try to drink fresh juices, if possible. Off-the-shelf juice products are acceptable, as long as they are 100% juice with no sugar or other additives.

If you are beginning a juice fast, there are certain juices you may wish to avoid and certain ones that are especially beneficial. Because of their acid content, most nutritionists do not advise orange or tomato juice (these are better tolerated if mixed with equal portions of water). The best juices are fresh carrot, grape, celery, apple, cabbage, or beet. They also recommend “green drinks” made from green leafy vegetables because they are excellent “de-toxifiers.”

Fruit juices are “cleansers” and are best taken in the morning. Since vegetable juices are “restorers” and “builders,” they are best taken in the afternoon.

I usually dedicate a portion of my 40-day fast to a special liquid formula, which I have found to be effective over many years. A few recipes and my comments are on this page, as well as a helpful schedule.

- One gallon distilled water
- 1-1/2 cup lemon juice
- 3/4-cup pure maple syrup
- 1/4-teaspoon cayenne pepper. The lemon juice adds flavor and vitamin C, the maple syrup provides energy, and the cayenne pepper — an herb — acts to open small blood vessels which, I believe, helps the body as it cleanses itself of stored toxins. (A word of caution: although I use this formula with no ill effects, cayenne pepper could cause severe physical reactions in persons with a specific allergy to this herb.)

My favorite juice is a mixture of 100% pure white grape juice and peach juice. The juice is available in frozen cans under the Welch label. Most knowledgeable nutritionists recommend:

- Watermelon — just put it in the blender without adding water
- Fresh apple juice
- Green juice — blend celery, romaine lettuce, and carrots in equal proportions. (Vegetable juices like this one are important, for they supply the electrolytes necessary for proper heart function!)

Some nutritionists recommend warm broth, especially if you live in a colder climate. You may find their recipes helpful:

- Boil sliced potatoes, carrots, and celery in water. Do not add salt. After about a half-hour, drain off the water and drink.
- Gently boil three carrots, two stalks of celery, one turnip, two beats, a half head of cabbage, a quarter of a bunch of parsley, a quarter of an onion, and a half clove of garlic. Drain off the broth and drink up to two or three times daily.

You may find the following daily schedule helpful during your fast. I recommend you print it and keep it handy throughout your fast.

- 5:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. Fruit juices, preferably freshly squeezed or blended, diluted in 50 percent distilled water if the fruit is acid. Orange, apple, pear, grapefruit, papaya, grape, peach or other fruits are good.
- 10:30 a.m. – noon Green vegetable juice made from lettuce, celery, and carrots in three equal parts.
- 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Herb tea with a drop of honey. Make sure that it is not black tea or tea with a stimulant.
- 6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Broth from boiled potatoes, celery, and carrots (no salt).

Information taken from the website: www.21days.churchofthehighlands.com

Author: Bill Bright

The Book of Jude

His Mercy is More 2021

History of the Book:

Jude is the half brother of Jesus and probably did not become a follower of his brother until after the Resurrection. He would know both sides of the faith. Having grown up in the household of Jesus and still remaining a skeptic. Then he experienced the full conversion of choosing to follow his Messiah.

There are many looming enemies to the church of Jesus Christ. The greatest threat to the church is the infiltration of false teaching (2 Peter 2:1-3; 3:3). It is a deadly force which takes no captives but destroys everything in its pathway. The goal of false teachers is to destroy and bring death to the body of believers. We have an obligation to protect ourselves against such a force.

Jude visits some Old Testament examples of where God must severely judge people and places for their blatant disobedience. God struck the murmuring Israelites; He removed the fallen angels and those is Sodom and Gomorrah were condemned for their wickedness. God is serious about how we live.

Gnostics believed you were saved by the amount of knowledge you have. Jude is declaring a spiritual war on those who oppose the grace of God. Gnosticism was a direct assault on the Gospel of Grace. Christianity teaches knowing Jesus personally is the difference maker. When we know and live for Jesus, He changes our behavior to match our beliefs. (vs.4,8,16)

A deliberate choice is being suggested by Jude for the believer. Your conduct should line up with your beliefs. This a corporate call to be merciful toward others. Mercy is not what a person deserves, but what they need. Mercy is an attribute of the character of God. It is an essential quality of God. It is based on grace. It is best expressed in forgiveness. It is compassion without expectation of a return.

There is a threefold description for Jude's audience.

One, he is speaking to those who were called into personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This is a personal choice to follow Jesus no matter what? It is running head on into the corruption of Gnosticism and the ego of the mind.

Two, there is a real struggle for the faith. The second level of poignant target is to those who acknowledging there is a real battle for the soul. We are in a conflict for how much attention are we going to give to soul matters?

Third, he is warning us as a motivation for the future. Jesus is coming again; compromise is here and how we prepare to face the battle is written in this effort of being mercy givers.

3 Prominent Places for Mercy in Jude:

- **Jude 1:2 (ESV) MULTIPLIED MERCY:** ² May **mercy**, peace, and love be multiplied to you.”
- **Jude 1:21 (ESV) PERSISTENT IN MERCY:** ²¹ **waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.**
- **Jude 1:23 (ESV) DEMONSTRATE MERCY:** ²³ **to others show mercy with fear.**

Day 1—Author: Karen Hetrick

Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: Jude 1

What is in a name and what do they mean? Names are important, for me anyway. For instance, my son, Michael. I always knew he would have the name Michael, even before he was conceived. His name means “Who is like God.” This is according to the website “Behind the Name.” Who is like God? Isn’t that what all Christians should strive to be like?

In the book of Jude, verse one we see this greeting: “Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James.” *This doesn’t have anything to do with meaning but it’s who he sees himself as. He was not only the brother of Jesus, he was His servant and proud to be so. Identity is important when it comes to who you are in Christ.*

In this text, the title of servant is more than just serving. Jude was saying he is a slave to Christ, as in he belonged to Jesus. Belonging to someone can be negative, but in this context, it was an honor. Belonging to Christ is to be part of His family.

Jude was addressing the “called;” those who are a part of Christ’s family.

During this first day of our fast, do you belong to Christ, or are you merely a follower? Belonging means you will give up all to be with Him. As you ponder what you will “give up” during the next 21 days, count the cost of what you are losing against what you will gain by submitting to Christ Jesus.

Scripture to meditate on: 1 John 3:18; Ephesians 4:12; Romans 1:1,7; 1 Corinthians 1:1,2

Day 2—Author: Karen Hetrick

May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you. Jude 2

When you greet someone, what do you most often say? Hi? Hello? Good morning or afternoon? These are typical greetings for us. But what is the purpose of a greeting? To acknowledge the person? How about to extend a blessing upon them? A prayer of good fortune?

In Jude 2, Judah is giving a prayer of blessing to those who have been called. “May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.” He was wishing God’s goodness upon the saints. Judah starts with mercy. This is God’s undeserving favor upon us. This isn’t something we can earn; it’s a free gift when we choose to believe Jesus is the son of God and gave His life for us. Mercy is what we will receive on the day of judgment. The blood of Jesus covers this for us. He is merciful and He also wants us to show mercy. As the mercy has be “multiplied” to us, this in turn gives us leave to extend that mercy upon others.

Next is peace. Peace is a help for the saints to obey God’s calling because we know that we have been forgiven. It’s what we need in our daily lives when we become overwhelmed with the happenings around us. We need peace to be able to do the work God has called us to do when others come against us. Lastly, Judah prays the blessing of love upon the saints. Love is God’s generosity in granting His favor upon us.

Why do you believe the greeting was important to include in the book of Jude? It is a letter to the saints. Judah was warning the saints of the false teachers that had crept in to convince the people to deny the authority of God. Giving them a prayer of blessing would help them to feel secure in their faith and strengthen them against the ungodly.

God has given us His scriptures to strengthen us as well. During this fast nourish yourself with scripture. Dig deeper to satisfy the hunger deep within your soul. This way when your body may be weak from fasting, your soul will be fulfilled with God’s provision to be able to see the false teachings around you.

Also, examine your heart, is it full of mercy for others, or do you carry around resentment and unforgiveness. This is a time of confession and renewal or ourselves.

Scriptures to meditate on: Psalm 145:9; Titus 3:5; Philippians 4:7; Romans 8:38,39; 1 John 4:16, James 2:13

Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. Jude 3 & 4

We all know what a warning label is for. It is to caution people against harm. There are many types of warnings everywhere: Street signs, chemical bottles, even food labels for allergies. If we are wise, we will read them to be better informed.

In Judah's letter, he had a warning for his beloved people, or fellow believers, to contend or be strong in the faith. He wrote to them about others who had secretly crept into the church and were teaching falsely. These men had their own idea of how to live life. They believed that God's grace was big enough that they could live anyway and God's grace would cover it. They lived ungodly and expected to be forgiven. They also denied the true authority of Jesus. Judah was concerned for the Christians; that is why he wrote the letter of warning.

God's grace is big. The blood of Jesus paid the price so we could experience God's grace. Knowing that is not an entitlement to sin; it is a forgiveness of sin after repentance. When we become believers in Jesus Christ and choose to follow Him, we should want to turn from sin out of love for Him. We call upon Jesus to help us, not just forgive so we can continually live in a life of misery. We need to turn from the lies Satan tells us so we can experience the full blessing from God.

Take some time to examine your heart. Who are you listening to? Have you given in to some false teachings that have pulled you from God's truth? If so, meditate on these scriptures of truth: 2 Chronicles 7:14, James 4:8, Luke 13:3, Acts 20:21

Additional scriptures to meditate on: 2 Timothy 1:9; Hebrews 4:16; 1 Timothy 1:16

Day 4—Author: Pastor Eric Abel

“Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.” Jude 5

Commentary:

People often forget. Sometimes we “forget” because of life circumstances, or being overloaded, or the temporary convenience of forgetting. Sometimes, we just flat out do not remember for what ever reason. Forgetting what we should remember has a great cost, just like remembering what we should forget has a great cost. Our minds are fickle.

In this verse, Jude, who is a very learned Jew, reminds the new Jewish believers that Jesus saved the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt. Some scholars date the time of Moses leading the Jewish exodus out of Egypt at the year 1440 BC. From a human perspective, that statement seems to be irrational. How can Jesus lead the Jews out of Egypt more than a millennium before He was physically born?

Jesus came and lived and died to set *all men* free. This freedom is not merely a physical freedom, but rather a spiritual freedom that gives life, hope, peace, and sets the context to live a truly free life. We are free not only in good times, but also in a time of severe opposition and looming physical threats. Jesus was with the Jews in the midst of their captivity, and God is true to His character and will not abandon His bride, the Church, in any way...ever.

Even when a believer is in physical chains, Jesus offers HOPE. In one verse Jude identifies two of God's Attributes that at some points seem to contradict: God is both just and merciful. God is great, even greater than the depth of our greatest failures.

Life Application:

This particular text has two very important applications. God does redeem us from our captivities, and there is also a consequence for disobedience. We need to strive to live a “holy” life, and then be quick to confess our sins and repent when we sin against God. We can't hide from God. He sees what we do, He knows what we think, and He even knows everything that we could have done. God is all knowing, all powerful, merciful, and just. He is greater than our human capacity to comprehend, and yet in His kindness and mercy, He allows us to know Him when we earnestly seek Him.

Cross References: Hebrews 3:16-4:2, Numbers 26:64-65, I Corinthians 10:1-12, Psalm 106:26: 2 Peter 3:1, 2 Peter 1:12-13, Romans 15:15

Day 5 - Author: Pastor Eric Abel

“And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, He has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day” Jude 6

Camp Forest Springs is a Christian Camp located in northern Wisconsin. The Camp is set on hundreds of acres of forest land, and is blessed to be right on the beautiful James lake. There is beautiful wild life including deer, bear, huge fish, and many kinds of birds. The lake is formed in the shape of a horse shoe that is setting on it's side to look a bit like a backward “C”. For the Camper's safety, no sailor, canoe operator, boater, paddle boarder, or swimmer is permitted to go beyond the peninsula. This is done for safety reasons, and allows the life guards to keep a watchful eye on all the people who are enjoying the camp. Inevitably, someone pushes the limits, goes out of site, gets stuck, and then the guards have to stop all other activities to go and rescue the disobedient camper. Disobedience is embarrassing and has consequences for the violating camper, the other campers who have to stop their activities and get out of the water, and the water front staff who have to give there full attention to rebellious camper. Disobedience has consequences.

Obedience also has consequences. Boundaries are good. Actually, they provide freedom, protections, and an arena to demonstrate submission and respect to authority. Boundaries are arenas for blessings. When an authority sets limits, then clear arenas to live in safety appear. Boundaries provide the potential for great blessing. Boundary provides an arena for obedience and reward, and also for disobedience and consequence. As people, we are more able to be blessed when we see that limits are good, and actually boundaries are a necessity to live a Godly life.

Then why do we hate them and constantly push the limits? I do. It is interesting that God's creation chooses to rebel against Him in both the angelic realm, and in His highest creation, humankind. God is not surprised. Because God is totally just, and God is totally merciful, God must administer a consequence for rebellion. The fallen angels must pay for their own disobedience, but through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross at Calvary, He took the penalty for sin.

Life Application:

God is very good. He holds a very good eternity for those whom He loves and who a part of the family of God.

Read Romans 5:1-5

Choose today to live a life in obedience to God.

Cross References: Matthew 25:41, Matthew 8:29, Ephesians 6:12, Revelation 20:10, 2 Peter 2:9

Day 6—Author: Eric Abel

“Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities , which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.” Jude 7

Commentary:

Fire is mesmerizing. On a dark night, when there is a stillness and peace, have you ever just watched a campfire? In some ways, the fire captures you, consumes your attention and then the fire owns your thoughts. The fire is more than just a mental snare, soon all of the paper, the tender, and eventually the fuel that you put into it is totally consumed or devastated. You can not reconstruct a chair out of the ashes of a fire. Fire destroys. A controlled fire is beautiful and beneficial, but an out of control fire is disastrous and can easily cost you, your possessions or even your life.

Often, when referring to sexual lusts, the term “burning” is used. It is extremely descriptive and quite correct. Boundaries are again so important in the area of sexual thoughts and actions. Sexual thoughts in the wrong context, quickly have the potential to lead to disastrous and sinful behavior, even to death. Sodom and Gomorrah serve as examples of God's justice. He even showed mercy to Lot and his family in the midst of destruction.

Life Application:

To willfully and blatantly continue to sin in the very face of God, shows contempt for God. A very practical application of this verse is, “If you are sinning, please stop. If you are not sinning, don't start.” Sin is a big deal, and it can consume your thoughts, your resources, and ultimately take you life both now and for eternity.

In Romans 12, God clearly tells us that He wants us to “hate what is evil and to cling to what is good.” The very practice of clinging to what is good, puts us in a position to be with good things, good people, and good thoughts! God is at work, and often works in the darkest of times to bring hope to the hopeless, and life to the dying. God ALWAYS give hope and life, even in the face of the biggest challenges. Choose hope! Colossians 1:27 states “To them God has chosen to make known among the gentiles the glorious riches of the mystery, which is Christ in you the HOPE of glory “ When we recognize Christ is always with us, we can ALWAYS have HOPE!

Cross References: 2 Peter 2:6, Romans 1:26-27, Luke 17:29, Jeremiah 50:40, Genesis 19:24-26, Genesis 18:20, 1 Corinthians 6:9, Matthew 25:41, Isaiah 1:9, 2 Peter 3:7, Mark 9:43-49, Matthew 11:24

Day 7—Author: Manasseh Wakawa

Yet in like manner these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones. Jude 8

Today, Jude pointed out another group with a behavior similar to that of Sodom and Gomorrah. He started by saying, “Yet in like manner these people also relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones”. They got it wrong right from the start because their premise was wrong. They were “RELYING” on their dreams as their source of belief and authority. By so doing, they defied God’s authority and therefore went on to practice all sorts of evil and wickedness just like Sodom and Gomorrah. Again, God had to release his anger upon them in judgment.

In the same manner, we see many today who have rejected the authority of God and his Word (the Bible) committing every kind of evil and wickedness.

Prayer:- FATHER, ENABLE ME BY THE POWER OF YOUR HOLY SPIRIT TO BE ALWAYS SUBMISSIVE TO YOUR AUTHORITY AND THE AUTHORITY OF YOUR WORD, in the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!

Day 8—Author: Manasseh Wakawa

But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you.” Jude 9

But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgement, but said, “The Lord rebuke you.” Here we see a sharp contrast in angel Michael’s behavior from those rebellious, evil and wicked people. As powerful as he was, yet did not become proud and took matters in his hands. Even though he was under intense pressure fighting with the devil, yet he refused to take the place of God. He submitted to the authority of God by realizing that ONLY GOD has the authority to judge the devil. Knowing this fact, he wisely and boldly brought the devil face to face with God by saying, “The Lord rebuke you.”

Today, we should learn from angel Michael that, there are some battles that we have to get out of the way and let our Heavenly Father take over. Report the devil (the authorities) to God, step back and watch him fight. He has never lost a battle and therefore with him we are always on the winning side.

Prayer:- Heavenly Father, teach me to live your battle for you and help me to fight the ones you assigned me, in the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!

Day 9—Author: Manasseh Wakawa

But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively. Jude 10

But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively. Here again, Jude courageously took these proud and arrogant people head on. With their blasphemous spirit and not understanding what they were doing, behaving like animals, they rejected God's mercy and thus incurred his judgement and destruction.

God expects us to be humble and teachable so that we can grow in God's grace and mercy. In this way the church will become stronger and ready to fight against every evil forces the devil might bring.

Prayer:- Lord, help us to grow in grace and in mercy as we live and serve you moment by moment, in the mighty name of Jesus: Amen!

Day 10—Author: Pastor Jimmi Delay

Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error and perished in Korah's rebellion. Jude 11

Jude 11

What sorrow awaits them! For they follow in the footsteps of Cain, who killed his brother. Like Balaam, they deceive people for money. And like Korah, they perish in their rebellion.

Jude highlights the wrong doing of these false teachers and compares them to three wayward men of the Old Testament. Cain, the first born of Adam, aloud his pride to get in the way of God's rules for worship. He wanted to worship God on his own selfish terms. When Abel was blessed for obeying God's commands for worship, Cain was willing to go as far as killing Abel to justify his own folly. Balaam deceived God's people by leading them into thinking he was doing the Lord's work, but all he was after was power and money. Korah led a rebellion against Moses and Aaron because he hated being under their authority. Little did he realize, he was ultimately rebelling against God's authority. Each of these three men had swift judgement that fell on them because of their wicked ways and were consumed in their sorrows.

Take a moment to reflect on the folly of these three men. Do you worship God only on your own terms? Do you use your spirituality to seek selfish gain? Do you rebel against those that God has put in authority over you? I'm sure we could all find someone else to blame these sins on. But before we point our fingers at someone else, let us be sure that we are not guilty of the very same things.

“Our sins they are many, His mercy is more.”

Genesis 4, 2 Peter 2:15-16, Numbers 22:21-31, Numbers 16

Day 11—Author: Pastor Jimmi Delay

These are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as they feast with you without fear, shepherds feeding themselves; waterless clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted; Jude 12

Jude 12

When these people eat with you in your fellowship meals commemorating the Lord's love, they are like dangerous reefs that can shipwreck you. They are like shameless shepherds who care only for themselves. They are like clouds blowing over the land without giving any rain. They are like trees in autumn that are doubly dead, for they bear no fruit and have been pulled up by the roots.

Jude talks about the craftiness of these false teachers. They often go unnoticed for who they really are. They find their way into the most intimate and vulnerable relationships. Sharing a meal with someone is one of the most wonderful ways to fellowship and to share Truth. But these foolish people are only in it for themselves. They have a great opportunity to be a good influence and testimony of truth, but instead they choose only to gratify their own desires. The result is a fruitless person who has no depth. Their hearts are shallow, and death is their closest friend.

It's easy to read the words "false teacher" and assume that the phrase can't be applied to us. You might say, "I'm not a teacher, so this passage doesn't apply to me". As you continue to read Jude, replace the word "teacher" with the word "influencer". We all have influence on people in one way or another. Let us not be "false influencers" who seek to gratify our own desires. May we be known as influencers of Truth.

"Our sins they are many, His mercy is more."

Reflections:

Lined writing area consisting of 25 horizontal lines for text entry.

Day 12—Author: Pastor Jimmi Delay

wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever. Jude 13

Jude 13

They are like wild waves of the sea, churning up the foam of their shameful deeds. They are like wandering stars, doomed forever to blackest darkness.

If you've ever been to the Ocean, you probably remember seeing spots here and there where the water has washed up some kind of ocean filth. Often surrounding that filth are heaps of gross yellow foam. That is the picture that Jude is painting for us. These false teachers churn up their filthy behavior and the results are evident for all to see. He also compares these false influencers to a wandering star. In those days, people depended heavily on stars to give them direction. The stars were the iPhone Siri of that day. It's frustrating to try and get Siri to give you directions and she ends up proving to be unreliable or out of service. Jude says that these false influencers cannot be relied upon because they are destined to be lost.

As you think about these mental pictures displayed above, spend some time asking God to reveal any filthy behavior or areas you have misguided people. Just as Jude was concerned about these false influencers corrupting the people of God, we also should be concerned that we do not fall into the same behaviors. Only God can see that in our hearts and as we walk along with Him, He will reveal any areas that must be cleaned up and set back on the right course.

“Our sins they are many, His mercy is more.”

Isaiah 57:20, James 1:5-8, Proverbs 2:3-6

Day 13—Author: Pastor Sam Speck

*“It was also about these that **Enoch**, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones,”- Jude 14*

There are some things in life that very few people get the opportunity to experience. There are only a few people who will ever know what it is like to walk on the moon. Very few can ever say that they got the opportunity to be President of the United States. How many people can say they have scaled Everest? All of these things have only been accomplished by a small percentage of the world’s population. Something infinitely rarer than any of these is there are two people who can say that they have never experienced physical death. One of them is in our passage today, Enoch and the other is Elijah.

“By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken, he was commended as having pleased God. 6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” -

Hebrews 11:5-6

Enoch gets about 6 verses dedicated to him in the beginning of Genesis, we don’t really know much about him, so what qualifies this man to be one of the two who would never experience physical death? Genesis 5 it tells us that he *“walked with God”* and in Hebrews 11 lays it out for us, he was a man of great faith! I want to focus on Enoch today because in the midst of the fast I think there is much to be learned from him. We are just about 2/3rds of the way through the fast and at this point it could be easy for us to forget why we are undertaking this fast. Enoch was taken without experiencing death because he lived in such a way that was pleasing to God. That can only be done by living a life of Faith! What does that look like? How do we live a life of faith today? Hebrews lays it out very simply for us. We must first believe that He exists. That seems so simple, but how often do we remind ourselves that we do not serve a theory or a concept, we serve a God that is living and active. Our God is working today, and He wants to walk with you today as He walked with Enoch. Secondly, we need to believe that He rewards us as we seek Him! We do not work in vain; we are working for an eternal reward. We may not get to experience those rewards today, but they have much more value than anything you can purchase here on earth.

Reflection Time:

In what areas are you struggling with Faith? Be honest with God today and tell Him that you are struggling and that you need help to believe.

Write out the places or times in your day when it is easiest to forget that God is with you. Make a point to focus on the presence of God in those moments today.

Day 14—Author: Pastor Sam Speck

*“to execute judgment on all and to convict all the **ungodly** of all their deeds of **ungodliness** that they have committed in such an **ungodly** way, and of all the harsh things that **ungodly** sinners have spoken against him.” - Jude 15*

Now that I have a toddler that is learning to talk, I have come to recognize the power of the repeated word. When Sawyer wants to really tell me something, he makes sure to repeat it so that I have no chance of missing what he is saying. This is true for when something is repeated anywhere, if someone really wants you to remember they are most likely going to repeat it. This is even true in God’s word, when you start to see a word repeated over and over again it is probably good to pay attention. In this passage you may have noticed that the word “ungodly” is all over the verse. This word means to deny or disobey God, and it is in stark contrast to the way the man we talked about yesterday, Enoch, lived.

In this specific verse it is piggybacking off of yesterday where Jude reminds us that Jesus is going to come back. He is coming back to pronounce judgement onto the ungodly. Ungodliness is the main characteristic of these people that it is in every aspect of who they are. The first 3 uses of the word ungodly will help me explain what I mean.

1. *“all the ungodly.”* The people are described as ungodly.
2. *“deeds of ungodliness.”* Their actions, the things they do are ungodly.
3. *“an ungodly way.”* The motives for why they do what they do are ungodly.

They are ungodly people, with ungodly actions, with ungodly motives. These are the people that Jesus is coming back to cast judgement upon. We are not responsible for the judgement of these people; we should not be surprised when people without God act in an ungodly fashion. Our responsibility is to not allow ourselves to be tainted by this ungodliness but to live in such a way that help the ungodly to see the goodness and salvation of our God. There is a reason Jude is focusing on **mercy**, we need to be God’s vessels in practicing **mercy** to the ungodly, in hopes that they may come to repentance by the work of the Holy Spirit.

Reflection Time:

Who are the ungodly in your life that need mercy today? Would you take time to pray for them right now?

Would you ask the Holy Spirit to check your heart and your motives to make sure there is no root of ungodliness in your own life?

Day 15—Author: Pastor Sam Speck

*“These are grumblers, malcontents, **following their own sinful desires**; they are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage.” -*

Jude 16

I think if we are all honest with ourselves, we would admit that we all have stubbornness in us. I know that I definitely do, I like to be in control and to do things the way that I want them done. To the point that I will get frustrated if I don't get to do them my way. I don't say this to make any excuses for myself but to let you know that this is something that is prevalent in all of us. Jude recognizes that in this passage, people are always prone to follow their own desires. Our culture is part of the problem, it tells people that if they want to do something that they should be able to do it, even if that desire is sinful. The Bible is telling us we need to work on overcoming these desires to live in holiness that Jesus calls us to. How do you know you are living in your own sinful desires? See if you recognize any of these behaviors in your life:

1. Grumbling. Do you often find yourself complaining? It doesn't matter what about if you are upset with things in your life and you would talk about those things then notice the blessings then you may have a problem with grumbling.
2. Malcontents. Are you always dissatisfied? Nothing is ever enough, you always need more money, pleasure, or happiness. You don't find your contentment in Christ.
3. Boasting. Are you always concerned with how people view you? You try to do your best to make yourself look good in front of others. It matters more what others think about you than what God thinks about you.
4. Favoritism. You only love people based on what they can give to you. You give people more time if they are able to give you something in return. If showing kindness to someone gives you no benefit, then you don't see the point.

This is the battle we fight against the flesh everyday church. In the midst of fasting, we need to be pushing back against these instincts of the flesh. Fasting seeks to show us that we can find our satisfaction in God and not in the desires of the flesh. Don't listen to the lies of the flesh that the only way to live a happy life is to do what you want, hold onto the promises of God!

Reflection Time:

Which of these desires do you struggle with? Confess that to God and ask Him to meet that desire.

Go read John 10:10 and see what God wants for the life and what those sinful desires will do to you if you continue to live for them.

REMEMBER YOU WERE WARNED:

But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jude 17

Perseverance is a good word for the Christian. Press on despite the odds. Do not quit, no matter what impedes your progress. These Jews were battling tremendous opposition to their Christian faith in the first century. The culture was against their faith. It was a struggle to make a living and Christianity was not popular.

Some were being persecuted for their faith. If the pressure became too much to bear, they would pick up their belongings and move to another region where they could practice their faith.

Jude is encouraging these faithful followers to persevere. He first reminds them to 'remember.' Review how God has been faithful to other generations? From one generation of Christ followers to the next, God has met their needs, delivered them from their trials and shown Himself to be strong.

The second part of Jude 17 is about predictions. Jude is informing us that many of the writers of the New Testament had predicted these apostates would come. Jude reminds us how Peter (2 Peter 2:1), John (2 John 7), Titus, (Titus 1:16) and Paul (2 Corinth 11:13-15; Galatians 1:6-9; Phil 3:18-19) all warned us as followers of Christ there would be enemies to our message who would creep in and cause confusion. Paul even warned young Timothy to prepare for it in his letters to the young pastor: (2 Timothy 3:1-5,13).

You should be aware in our current culture there is a strong compulsion to lessen the value of Biblical doctrine. Churches are watering down the message to attract an audience. They are changing positions on gender, Bible interpretation, end time teaching and developing new language for marriage and family.

1. Application: Can you remember a time in your life when you wanted to quit, but you persevered, and it paid off? Tell us about that experience?
2. Are you aware of the changing times in church doctrine? What change have you heard about or read that concerns you the most? Write it down and pray against this false teaching creeping into our churches?
3. Choose one of the highlighted scriptures above in the predictions paragraph and pray over it to protect our church against false teaching.

Day 17—Author: Pastor John Bouquet

They said to you, “In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions.” Jude 18

These are the ‘last days’ for sure. We are 2,000 years closer than when Jude wrote this little epistle. A Scoffer is defined as one who “manifests contempt by insulting words or actions. A scoffer considers themselves superior and enjoys mocking the Christian.”

Peter was in total agreement with Jude on this warning. **2 Peter 3:3 (ESV)** *knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.”* One of the signs of the last days is the prevalence of the scoffing. It is evident in our current world, that people openly and blatantly mock God. It is evident in our media outlets that the Christian position is old and outdated. To hold to any traditional Biblical position is mocked. Our educational institutions are opposed to the Christian position on creation, marriage and family and all Christian positions.

Jude is asking us to develop a sense of discernment. To have the wisdom to tell the difference between the godless and the Godly is to have spiritual discernment. Be on guard as to what you are being told and what you know inherently to be true in the Bible. God’s Word is unchanging, the same yesterday, today and forever. **(2 Tim 2:15)**

You can see in the world today the ungodly passions of those who scoff at God. There is a pride about the sin being committed today. It has crept into our churches and families. The Scriptures teach it is clearly sin. People justify their conduct and choices based on their circumstances. If one can justify their sin, then they can practice it with a clear conscience. However, God does not make allowances for people to sin. His Word is clear and concise. **(2 Cor 4:2)**

The main reason for scoffers entering the church today and making a foothold is because of the lack of spiritual maturity. If there is a storm, the trees with the deepest root system will withstand the force of the storm. Then the goal in these ‘LAST DAYS’ is to grow a deep rooting system. How deep and healthy are your roots?

Application:

1. Write down an area where you see scoffers making a mockery of God and His Church.
2. How can you develop a stronger discernment or spiritual wisdom for pointing out the difference between the godless and the Godly?
3. How can you grow your roots deeper in preparation for the storm of compromise coming and ungodly living?

Day 18—Author: Pastor John Bouquet

It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. Jude 19

False teachers and apostasy is something where over time it does tremendous damage. The damage is threefold as stated in this 19th verse.

DIVISION: If a church does not rally around truth, then other teachings will surface, and people will begin to follow those who teach a gospel contrary to the one in which we believed. (2 Corinthians 11:4 and Galatians 1:7)

We have a perfect illustration in the events of 2020 when the political spectrum and the positions on the Covid-19 divided the body of Christ. The positions churches took either united their body or divided believers. In some cases, families were dividing over their political and medical understandings. Much of this controversy was the result of where people got their information and its spin.

WORLDLY PEOPLE: The second danger of false teaching is it results in sensuality. Worldly people love the flesh, sin and self. People of the world are usually self-focused and do not have a passion for the spiritual. The term used here by Jude is referring to Greek Philosophy where 'soulish' or sensual things were priority. How a person felt, what they enjoyed for pleasure and the persons desire was superior? The spiritual thinking follower of Christ seeks God, His Word, and the Spirit in their pursuits. (Matthew 6:33)

DEVOID OF THE SPIRIT: One thing is certain, if one is devoid of the Spirit, they cannot be spiritual. The Holy Spirit comes to dwell in a believer when they accept Christ as the Savior of their soul. The Holy Spirit comes to take up residence in the soul of the person. Their body becomes the dwelling place of God's Spirit. (1 Cor 6:19,20) The Holy Spirit is the guarantee of God's presence in our lives. A person who is devoid of the Spirit, is lost, empty and bound for a Christless eternity. (John 3:5; Rom 8:9; 1 John 3:24; 4:13). This is a good place for you to confirm you know Jesus Christ. Is the Holy Spirit leading you and speaking to your soul from the Word of God?

Application:

1. How can you contribute to the unity of your church?
2. What area of your life could you become more spiritual in the way you think or act?
3. Choose one of the Scriptures highlighted in this page and meditate on it for today?

Day 19—Author: Sherry Bouquet

But you, dear friends, must build each other up in your most holy faith, pray in the power of the Holy Spirit, and await the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will bring you eternal life. In this way, you will keep yourselves safe in God's love. Jude 20, 21

If you have played or watched others play sports, chances are you have heard: "the best offense is a good defense". It is easy to focus on what the opponent is doing or in the book of Jude, on the ones who are departing from the faith, peddling false doctrine or become ensnared in evil.

While it is sobering to be warned of those who are captive by false teaching, God's first word of defense for each of us is to turn INWARD. During the course of this fast I trust you have taken each truth and applied it to your own heart and life. When we point our finger at others, there are four more pointing back at us. In this passage, there are four exhortations for our spiritual defense.

So, dear friends, build each other up in your most Holy Faith. In a world that has been fragmented we are encouraged to take care of each other. Stay in fellowship with other believers, worshipping God together. (Hebrews 10:24-25). Together: Stay in the Word. Know the Word. Memorize the Word. Read the Word and let IT read you!

1. When you pray do you start with a list? An agenda, needs, even wants and desires? Instead, let the Holy Spirit direct you in your prayers. In this time of fasting and prayer the voice of the Spirit should grow louder, clearer. Listen in prayer...don't always speak. Let your prayer be led by the Spirit.
2. Remember, your salvation is not a result of your work but of the loyal love, mercy of our Savior. Thank him each day for that great gift of eternal life we do not deserve and could never earn. Look at your days, your moments, in light of eternity...our salvation is forever!
3. God's love is safe and secure. My salvation depends on Him. In Him I am safe for now and eternity. (John 10:28-30) Be safe in God's provision of salvation, his highest expression of love!

Lord, grow my faith over my fear, I am safe in YOU. In a season that has fragmented and separated us in new and different ways, help us to stay in fellowship with believers, worshipping, learning God's word and living out our faith TOGETHER. Holy Spirit lead us in unity to be a testimony of your Love to a world in fear and darkness. Remind me of your Mercy, your loyal love, so I can share it with others

Day 20—Author: Sherry Bouquet

And you must show mercy to those whose faith is wavering. Rescue others by snatching them from the flames of judgment. Show mercy to still others, but do so with great caution, hating the sins that contaminate their lives. Jude 22, 23

After the focus on our inward being, Jude turns to our OUTWARD response of mercy.

Have you ever played the old-fashioned game of Mercy? Aka, Uncle or Peaknuckle? It is a game of strength, skill, endurance, and pain tolerance popular in Britain, Canada, Pakistan, India, the United States, and elsewhere. Maybe you saw it at school at lunchtime or recess.

Let me be the first to tell you...this is not how we are to extend Mercy to others! It is not our place to push and argue and fight to the point that someone cries “mercy” or “uncle” in defeat when restoration is God’s desire.

Contrary to the school yard game of Mercy, our outward extension of mercy should show we are sincerely compassionate for others who are drawn away from Truth. In today’s culture this is a lost art. Often we are thrust into opposing viewpoints, urged to have zero tolerance for those who do not agree with us.

It is in this hyper polarized, conflicted and discontent culture that we are called to be the instruments of Mercy. In a world where emotional sparks are flying and flames are raging, we are called to be a gentle, calming rain of Mercy, straight from the throne of God, saturated in His loyal love. A love that knows our own salvation is completely at the mercy of God’s love.

There are some who need compassion, among your loved ones or complete strangers. Their faith may be wavering, they may be confused or deluded by false teaching, they may be deceived by this worlds teaching. Do not hate them, show loyal love, mercy, to them. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit to discern when a word of love or gentle rebuke is necessary. Above all, show love.

There are others who need rescued, among your loved ones or complete strangers. Entangled in the desperate grasp of sin, harmful to them and others, our approach should be one of fear and not of superiority. “But for the grace God, there go I.” While the sin is abhorrent, the person is precious in the sight of God, one for which Jesus died.

Dear Lord, give me mercy, loyal love for those who are wavering in their faith. Show me when to speak and when to love. For those who are mired in the grip of sin, give me a heart to love and discernment to stay clear of evil. Help me to rely on the work of the Holy Spirit to bring revival to their soul.

Day 21—Author: Sherry Bouquet

Now all glory to God, who is able to keep you from falling away and will bring you with great joy into his glorious presence without a single fault. All glory to him who alone is God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord. All glory, majesty, power, and authority are his before all time, and in the present, and beyond all time! Amen. Jude 24, 25

When I was a toddler, my parents noticed that my right eye was beginning to turn in. Alarmed, they took me to an eye doctor. After examining my eyes, he prescribed glasses to correct my poor vision.

My parents expressed their concern that a toddler, not quite two years old, would even be willing to keep the new glasses on. The doctor assured them that the improvement in my vision would be so dramatic, I would certainly have no wearing them.

Once the glasses were fitted, he proved to be correct. Although I cannot remember the experience of getting my first glasses, my parents affirm that they never had trouble getting me to wear them. The improvement in vision was dramatic enough for even a toddler to appreciate!

At this point of the letter, Jude delivers to us a vision correction. While there are some hard truths in this book, he closes by taking our eyes UPWARD, to our UPLOOK rather than our outlook. “Now to God” takes our focus right off ourselves, others or even the world around us.

God is able to keep us from falling. It is through God’s strength we can withstand the temptations of this life.

God is able to present us faultless, with great joy in His presence because the shed blood of Jesus at the cross has covered every sin, past, present and future. Our salvation is kept by Him and will one day be complete in His presence!

Jude ends this book as he started which gives more emphasis to this key truth in this famous final doxology. In Jude 1:1b he describes God as one “who loves you and keeps you safe in the care of Jesus Christ. His prescription is to give us new glasses, an upward look rather than an outward look on life. Once we look through these lenses, we will never want to go back to see life through any other lens than HIS, the One who has all glory, majesty, power and authority for all time. The Master of the Universe! No other power is greater on heaven or on earth.

Lord, give me a new vision in my life. As I close this fast, let me put away a view of the external and daily see the Eternal. Only in you may I extend mercy, loyal love to a hurting world, only in YOU will I be kept safe from falling, only in YOU will I know joy in your presence. Let me experience your Mercy more each day and let it flow to others.

Praying the Scriptures

Praying scripture is a good way to speak to GOD if you are unsure what to say. The following scriptures are just a few examples of praying scripture.

Ephesians 1:16 – 23

Ephesians 3:14 – 19

Philippians 1:9 – 11

Colossians 1:9 – 14

1 Thessalonians 3:11 – 13

Hebrews 13:20 – 21

Revelation 4:8

Revelation 1; 5:9

Revelation 10, 12 – 14.



Bethel Baptist Church

575 US Rte. 250 N.

Savannah, OH 44874

www.bethelchapel.com

Livestream on Facebook

www.facebook.com/Bethel-Chapel

Service Schedule

Sunday School—9:30am

Sunday Worship Service—10:45am

Wednesday Night Studies—6:30pm