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Standing Strong in the Storm: Jude's Strategies for Resilience in a Hostile World / Jude 17–21

› Slide #1

Alright, let's dive into God's Word and see what He has to say to us today. Turn with me to the book of Jude, verses 17 through 21. As we explore these verses, we'll unpack some powerful truths that are not only relevant to the believers of Jude's time but are incredibly pertinent to us in our present age.

Jude, the half-brother of Jesus, writes to the early Christians, urging them to contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. In these verses, he provides practical instructions for believers who are facing challenges, both internally and externally. Let's break it down:

› Slide #2

| Jude 17

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

There's a profound emphasis here on the importance of knowing and holding fast to the teachings of Christ as passed down by the apostles.

Throughout the New Testament, we see the apostles conveying the message of Jesus Christ and His gospel to the early Christian communities. Their writings, found in the epistles and other books of the New Testament, serve as authoritative guidance for the Church.

For instance, in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Paul writes,

› Slide #3-4

| 2 Timothy 3:16–17

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Here, we see the apostle Paul affirming the divine inspiration and authority of Scripture, which includes both the Old Testament and the teachings of Jesus and the apostles recorded in the New Testament.

Furthermore, in Acts 2:42, we read about the early believers

› **Slide #5**

| Acts 2:42

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Jude, and Luke, and Paul are calling us to immerse ourselves in the Word of God, diligently studying and meditating on Scripture. We should seek to understand the teachings of Jesus and the apostles and apply them to our lives with humility and obedience.

This means regularly reading and studying the Bible, attending church services where the Word of God is faithfully preached, engaging in small group Bible studies, and cultivating a personal prayer life. It also involves discerning between true biblical teaching and false doctrines, being vigilant against deception, and standing firm in the truth.

As we grow in our understanding of Scripture, we are called to live out its principles in our daily lives. This includes loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, loving our neighbors as ourselves, and fulfilling the Great Commission by making disciples of all nations.

The goal is to be transformed by the renewing of our minds through the

power of the Holy Spirit, conforming more and more to the image of Christ as we walk in obedience to His Word. By doing so, we will be equipped to contend earnestly for the faith and effectively fulfill our calling as ambassadors for Christ in a world that desperately needs the light of the gospel.

In a world full of competing ideologies and false teachings, it's crucial for believers to ground themselves in the timeless truths of Scripture.

› **Slide #6**

| **Jude 18**

They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions."

These scoffers, or mockers are individuals who scoff at the truth of God's Word, denying its authority and promoting their own selfish desires. We see this all around us today, don't we? The culture is saturated with voices that mock and undermine the Christian faith, seeking to lead believers astray.

We can see throughout the New Testament, warnings about false teachers and deceptive doctrines that seek to lead believers astray.

› **Slide #7-9**

| **2 Peter 2:1–3**

But false prophets also arose among the people, just as 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 many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not

idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

Peter does more than just warn us, he tells us what we must do to counter these false teachings. He warns believers to be on guard against such teachings and to cling to the truth of God's Word.

› **Slide #10-11**

Paul also shares similarly, in

1 Timothy 4:1–2

Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared,

Paul speaks of the Spirit explicitly saying that in later times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons. Again, we see the emphasis on the presence of false teachings inside the church and the importance of remaining steadfast in the truth.

This calls for us to be discerning and vigilant in our walk with God. We must be able to recognize false teachings and ideologies that contradict the Word of God and lead people away from the truth. This requires a solid foundation in Scripture and a reliance on the Holy Spirit for guidance and discernment.

This is only possible if we know our Bible. We need to be wary of any teachings or messages that deviate from the biblical truth and test everything against the standard of Scripture. Also, we should be careful not to be swayed by popular opinions or cultural trends that are contrary to God's Word.

Furthermore, Jude's warning about mockers serves as a reminder of the spiritual battle that we as believers are engaged in.

› **Slide #12-13**

| Ephesians 6:12

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

We must put on the full armor of God and stand firm in the faith, resisting the schemes of the enemy as we navigate a world filled with deception and spiritual warfare.

We must remain anchored in the truth of God's Word and continue to grow in our relationship with Him. It is only by doing so that we can withstand the attacks of the enemy and effectively fulfill our calling to be salt and light in a dark and broken world.

› Slide #14

| Jude 19

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

These false teachers cause division within the church with their deceptive teachings as they follow their natural instincts, rather than following the Holy Spirit.

Jude is emphasizing the importance being able to discern false teaching and maintaining the unity among believers who are grounded in the truth.

Jesus himself warned us of these false teachers.

› Slide #15

| Matthew 7:15

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous

| wolves.

And Paul mirrored Jesus' warning in

› **Slide #16-17**

| **2 Corinthians 11:13–15**

For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.

The world today is easily deceived. People want to have their ears tickled. This should not surprise us at all, though at times it makes me feel sick to see what is happening. We will watch some of these things going on in the church today in Sunday School.

We can see a consistent message of Scripture regarding the dangers of false teaching and the importance of discernment. We are called to test the spirits,

› **Slide #18**

| **1 John 4:1**

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.

And we are to hold fast to the truth

› **Slide #19**

| 2 Timothy 1:13–14

Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

We must test everything against the standard of Scripture and be wary of any messages or doctrines that deviate from the truth revealed in God's Word.

We would do well to be intentional about our spiritual growth and development. We must invest time in studying the Bible, seeking to understand its teachings and how they apply to our lives. We should also be discerning consumers of media and information, being careful not to be swayed by popular opinions or cultural trends that are contrary to God's Word.

But Jude doesn't leave us without hope. In verse 20, he gives us a directive:

› **Slide #20**

| Jude 20

But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,

We must be active in our spiritual growth and development.

› **Slide #21**

| Colossians 2:6–7

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught,

| **abounding in thanksgiving.**

Coming in here on Sunday morning, singing a few songs, and listening to me teach from the Bible is not enough. Believe me beloved, what we do here on Sunday morning is important, and when you miss Sunday morning you miss a key part of your spiritual growth. But we must do more.

We are called to build ourselves up in the faith, strengthening our relationship with God through prayer and dependence on the Holy Spirit.

› **Slide #22-23**

| **Romans 8:26–27**

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Our spiritual growth and our ability to discern and tests the spirits is not a passive endeavor but requires intentional effort and commitment on our part.

As we build ourselves up in our most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit, we will be equipped to navigate the challenges and trials of life with wisdom, strength, and discernment. By prioritizing our spiritual growth and dependence on God, we can experience the fullness of life that He has promised to those who trust in Him.

› **Slide #24**

| **Jude 21**

keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to

| eternal life.

Jude is emphasizing the importance of actively maintaining a close relationship with God and looking forward with hope to the ultimate fulfillment of His promises.

How do we keep ourselves in the love of God?

› Slide #25

| John 15:9–10

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

There is this connection between obedience and abiding in God's love. If I want my children to act a certain way I can do so by intimidation and the threat of punishment. But this would only be effective for a while. What I want most is for my children to be obedient because they love me. That is what God wants also.

› Slide #26-27

| Romans 8:38–39

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

› Slide #28

As we obediently follow Christ, God's love is inseparable from us. Nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. This assurance of God's unfailing love should give us confidence and security in their relationship with Him.

God's love in the Christian life is key to maintaining a close and intimate relationship with Him. As believers as we keep ourselves in the love of God, we are strengthened and sustained by His love, enabling us to persevere through trials and challenges as we wait for His return.

We must cultivate a deep and abiding relationship with God, rooted in His love, by spending time in prayer, worship, and meditation on Scripture, allowing God's love to permeate every aspect of our lives.

Again, this requires a conscious effort to align our thoughts, attitudes, and actions with His will. It involves living in obedience to His commands and seeking to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

As we keep ourselves in the love of God and eagerly await the return of Christ, we are strengthened and sustained by the hope of eternal life that He has promised to those who believe in Him. But we must prioritize our relationship with God and living in anticipation of His return, which is counter to what the world will tell us. But this is the only way we can experience the fullness of joy and peace that comes from knowing His love and living in accordance with His will.

Despite the challenges and trials we may face, we can take comfort in the unfailing love of God and the hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Our salvation is secure in Him, and as we remain steadfast in His love, we can confidently look forward to the mercy and grace that He promises to bestow upon us.

Let us heed the words of Jude and stand firm in the faith. Remembering the teachings of Christ and rejecting the false ideologies of the world. Let us actively pursue spiritual growth and cling to the love of God, knowing that our hope is found in Him alone. As we do so, may we be empowered by the Holy Spirit to boldly proclaim the truth and contend earnestly for the faith, until the day of Christ's return. Amen.